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ENGLAND is in grave danger. So we are told by the Government spokesmen in introducing the Service estimates. In danger not of being bankrupt by an expenditure of over £100,000,000 a year on armaments but of finding ourselves without an adequate Army and Navy and Air Force! Sir B. Eyres-Monsell, First Lord of the Admiralty, and Mr. Duff Cooper, Financial Secretary to the War Office, were in agreement that the Services were "cut to the bone." Sir B. Eyres-Monsell told us how "dismal" he found it to make any reduction in our expenditure on death and destruction. But he cheered up a bit when he reassured Sir Austen Chamberlain (now on the Executive of the League of Nations Union) that we were only postponing our building programme for six months. As it is, the Navy is to cost us merely £50,476,300—a reduction mainly due to cuts in wages and bonus, not to replacement, which is to proceed to the tune of £6,027,990. As for the Disarmament Conference, speakers on the Government side seemed to regard it as a silly interruption in the normal growth of competitive armaments.

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One young Conservative, Mr. Vyvyan Adams, showed that he possessed more vision than his leaders, while Major Attlee, on behalf of the Labour Party, sturdily repudiated the tradition of "continuity of policy" in armaments. Mr. Seymour Cocks spoke the obvious truth when he said that "the peoples of the world are far in advance of their Governments in this matter." Mr. Gordon MacDonald called attention to the growing realisation that much of the world's armament expenditure is due, not to the necessities of guarding trade routes nor even to the deep prejudices of people who cannot imagine a world order founded on anything but guns, but to the vested interest in arms and to the organised propaganda financed by armament interests. How many Mr. Shearers are at work in the world's press at this moment? Mr. Gordon MacDonald quoted Lord Snowden in the House of Commons just before the war. The Mr. Snowden of those days spoke "of an organisation of crooks. They are politicians, generals, manufacturers of armaments and journalists." And apart from crooks, he added that it would be "impossible to throw a stone on the benches opposite" without hitting a member who was financially interested in keeping up armament expenditure. Have things much changed to-day?

* * *

Comparative quiet still reigns, as we write, on the Shanghai front. But it may at any moment be broken.

for the intransigence of the Japanese has not abated. General Shirakawa on Tuesday contributed another of the comic touches with which the invaders regularly enliven this tragedy. A new clash was quite likely, he said, and if it occurred it would be China's fault; for although the Japanese army had voluntarily ceased fighting, the Chinese were making new defences. Ah! *ce méchant animal—quand on l'attaque, il se défend!* In the meantime, while this Japanese army is standing to at Shanghai, another one is busy at Mukden, helping to install Mr. Henry P'u, once Emperor of China, as Chief Executive of the new "independent" state of Manchuria. It is a prettily staged piece. Mr. P'u will no doubt be well coached in his part by the Tokio producers. Untroubled by any such fantasies as the Covenant of the League or the Nine-Power Treaty, he will be able to devote his energies to the extermination of the "bandits" in his republic and the maintenance of the "open door" for the Japanese.

* * *

We do not know yet what action the Assembly of the League is going to take. The general sense of the discussion at Geneva is clear enough. No delegation has ventured openly to support Japan, and many have roundly denounced her conduct—so roundly, indeed, that there has been angry talk in Tokio of her withdrawing from the League. But that threat is not a good reason for throwing up the sponge at Geneva. All that the League stands for has been, and is being, defied, and if it is not to go down with a crash—or peter out miserably—it must assert itself without equivocation. Lord Grey, in a speech at the Albert Hall the other day, gave the impression that he thought the League would do very well by doing little or nothing. The *Times* gave a very full report of this speech, and a much slighter one of those of Lord Cecil and others who voiced the contrary view, and the view which, we believe, has general support. Who can honestly say that, legal quibbles apart, Japan has not violated the Covenant? And who, unless his aim is to wreck the League, can desire the Assembly to make itself an accessory after the fact in this felony? We hope that the extreme step may be avoided of putting into force the sanctions of Article XVI. It is possible that a declaration by the member States of the League that they will refuse to recognise any changes affecting the sovereignty of China which are brought about by methods contrary to the Covenant or the Kellogg Pact would bring Japan to reason—especially in view of the present financial position. Five of her principal banks have just closed their doors and the Bank of Japan has come to the rescue with a loan of a million yen. The Japanese budget is unbalanced, and Japanese loans in London are extremely weak.

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Sunday, March 13th, is the day of the presidential election in Germany. The list of candidates contains five names—Hindenburg, Hitler, Düsterberg, Thälmann, Winter. The last, a freak candidate put up by currency cranks, is at the moment in gaol for fraud, and he will no doubt stay there. Colonel Düsterberg is the nominee of the Nationalists, Herr Thälmann of the Communists. The issue really lies between Marshal von Hindenburg and Herr Hitler, who has now become a German citizen by taking a sinecure post under the Brunswick Government. The issue, we need hardly say, is one of the utmost moment not merely for Germany but for all Europe. It is quite possible that Hindenburg may fail to get a clear majority over all other candidates at the polls on Sunday. In that case there must be a second ballot, in which the odds will be on Hindenburg. And his success ought to be certain if, as seems likely, the Nationalists give him their votes instead of combining with the Nazis in support of Hitler.

* * *

So many Conservatives have shown an anxiety to save the countryside from destruction that there seemed a good chance of the Town Planning Bill reaching the Statute Book undamaged. But property has again proved stronger than public interest and the Government was again defeated in Committee on a vital clause. By insisting that local authorities should always be compelled to make full compensation for damage to an individual interest which may be held to result from a refusal to permit "development" in a particular tract of land, the Committee has, in the Minister of Health's opinion, made the Bill "unworkable." Sir Edward Hilton Young has fought well for the Bill and one hopes that he will contest this clause again on the floor of the House of Commons. For the Committee may not be representative of the House in this matter. Not all Conservatives are like Metternich of whom it was said that he so loved to preserve what existed that, had he been present when God made order out of chaos, he would have prayed "Oh, God! preserve Chaos!" But it is the attitude of the majority of the Committee towards the chaotic development of the countryside.

* * *

It has been confidently stated this week that the Government, in the forthcoming Budget, proposes not only to reduce the income tax and surtax, but also to restore unemployment benefit to its old level. But it is said that there is no intention of restoring the sums deducted from the pay of teachers, civil servants, and the personnel of the fighting services, or of reviewing the means test in connection with unemployment insurance. According to these reports, the Government is set on reducing the income tax, but recognises, since Lord Snowden's speech, that it cannot do this without some equivalent on behalf of the poorer part of the community; and the resumption of the old rules of unemployment benefit (but not of the old conditions for getting it) is being put forward as the best available *quid pro quo*. For our part, we shall receive this and other forecasts of what the Budget will contain with a good deal of scepticism. But if there is enough money to consider changes on this scale, what about the means test? A drastic revision of the present disqualifications ought to take precedence not only over the claims of the direct tax-payers but even over the claims of the recipients of ordinary unemployment benefit.

* * *

The National Health Insurance scheme is steadily losing money, and the recent valuation of the assets of the Approved Societies showed a drop of over £7,000,000. This is due partly to a fall in contributions

owing to heavier unemployment, but mainly to a rise in sickness and disablement benefit—which may in part also be due to unemployment. The serious feature of the situation is that many of the Approved Societies are being compelled to curtail, or suspend altogether, the additional benefits—such as dental and hospital treatment—which were being provided out of the surpluses of previous years. This does not apply to all Approved Societies. But the system as a whole is drawing heavily on its reserves, and also cutting down the services which it affords. There are two courses open—either a readjustment of the rates of contributions and benefits, or a change of system designed to improve the efficiency of the scheme. Or perhaps both. Most people hold that the Approved Society system is working badly, and that it would be better to replace it by a scheme administered uniformly under direct national control. It is obviously unfair that a compulsory scheme subsidised by the State should deny to some insured persons benefits which it provides for others. But while unification might save money, it could hardly save enough to make the scheme balance; for there is no evidence that the increase in sickness claims is due to "malingering," though it may be in part due to a wider view on the doctors' part of what constitutes "sickness."

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The Anomalies Act, like any other economy measure, was bound to produce hardships. But it is also producing a great crop of quite indefensible injustices to unemployed married women. According to the figures given by the Minister of Labour a week or two ago, some 141,000 married women had had their claims for benefit disallowed down to the end of January. Of these no doubt a great many were properly disallowed. But it seems clear, from the evidence given to the Royal Commission last week by the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, that a wholesale victimisation is going on among these applicants. Numbers of *bona fide* married women workers, who have been in industry since their marriage and who have worked for varying periods from 12 to 28 years continuously down to 1930 or 1931, have been disallowed. Some are refused benefit because they will not take jobs at long distances from their homes—distances which may entail payment of 6s. or 7s. a week in fares. Others are refused because they cannot get a job within the area where they reside—that area being restricted to a 2d. bus ride from the home. This is the result of different Courts of Referees interpreting the regulations in different ways. And another set of anomalies arises from discrepancies in the Umpires decisions regarding claimants' "reasonable expectation" of getting back to employment in a depressed industry. Separated and deserted wives, and women who have less than eight stamps on their cards through illness, also help to swell the grim total. On all these points there appears to be an overwhelming case for the amendment of the regulations. Economy is not entitled to trample on sense and equity.

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The British Industries Fair is said to have been a success, but an educated foreigner, a Swede, for instance, would have left Olympia convinced that in this country we can produce only shoddy and badly designed stuff in most departments of decorative art. The furniture and china were particularly bad and showed that the exhibitors are completely out of touch with educated taste. Indeed most of the better-class manufacturers of these goods appear to have boycotted the exhibition. The carpets also were incredibly ugly, and when the designers tried to be "modern" the results were even worse than the usual debased versions of traditional patterns. Even in the textile department, firms like Courtaulds, so enterprising in technical improvements, showed no sign of employing the best available designers. We do not believe that the taste of the general public is as bad as this vast collection of hideously overornamented objects would suggest. In any case, there is a market, both here and abroad, for plain and well-designed china and furniture. And we hope that the Committee of Art and Industry appointed by the Government under Lord Gorell's chairmanship can induce manufacturers to produce and exhibit such goods at the next Fair.

* * *

Every turn in the Lindbergh baby episode shows truth to be not only stranger than fiction, but stranger even than the films. The self-confessed futility of the police; the intricate paraphernalia of cars, aeroplanes and radio which provide the background of the story; the negotiations with Messrs. Bitz and Spitale, bootleggers of "unimpeachable integrity"; the suspicious activities of the "Jackson Whites"; and the intervention, on the one hand, of President Hoover, on the other, of Al Capone, controller of the Chicago murder racket (and at present in prison on a charge of evading income tax)—these occurrences make up a fantasia which has the qualities rather of nightmare than of anything actual or credible. The sympathy of other nations goes out not only to the Lindberghs but to all decent citizens in this parody of a civilisation that America seems to be evolving.

* * *

Our City Editor to-day discusses the serious results that will follow if the sensational rise in the pound is permitted to go unchecked. It is due to speculative causes. Speculators expected the pound to rise in value, and their heavy buying made it rise much more than it would have done if transactions in it had been confined to legitimate supply and demand. The recent repayment of British borrowings from France and the United States was of course designed to give the world a feeling of confidence in sterling. But the last thing any sensible person wants is to attract back the precarious short-term foreign balances which fled the country last year, or to encourage speculation in sterling. For the world has difficult times ahead in the forthcoming discussion of reparations; and a failure to agree with the French, or a collapse in Germany, might easily cause a renewed withdrawal of foreign balances and a sharp renewal of the speculative trend. The pound might then be forced down again even more unreasonably than it has been forced up this week! But even apart from future speculative movements, we most emphatically do not want the pound to rise just now. The continued rise will prejudice the export trades, kill the trade revival which is beginning in the "sterling" *bloc*, and increase the demand for tariffs.

OBSCENE LIBEL

ON Monday last three Judges in the Court of Criminal Appeal upheld the sentence which had been passed upon Mr. Geoffrey de Montalk by the Recorder of London. The sentence was one of six months' imprisonment on a charge of obscene libel. The significance of this decision has not yet been realised by the public. They have heard of Mr. Montalk as an eccentric who wears a red cloak in court and as a minor poet who was foolish enough to write verses that are, according to any ordinary interpretation, obscene. But the personal side of this case is quite unimportant. It raises a public issue that intimately affects anyone who minds about the profession of letters or of journalism : it immediately concerns every editor, publisher, printer, author or journalist in the country. Indeed, it goes farther. It means that any individual who writes an indecent limerick and gives it to a friend is liable to imprisonment if it happens to fall into the hands of the police.

Consider the admitted facts in this case. Mr. Montalk asked a printer for an estimate of cost for printing a hundred copies for private circulation among his friends of a number of poems which contained obvious obscenities. The printer retained the poems, ostensibly with the object of making his estimate, and then handed them over to the police. Mr. Montalk was prosecuted and sentenced by Sir Ernest Wild to six months' imprisonment. Sir Ernest Wild explained the severity of the sentence on the ground that it was his duty to keep the purity of letters from defilement. There was no suggestion or, indeed, possibility that anyone except the printer could have been corrupted by Mr. Montalk's action. The crime was, in fact, purely technical. In brief, the law is that to show an obscene word to one other person—the fact that it was in this case a printer is legally quite immaterial—is to publish an obscene libel. And it may be punished with a sentence that one would usually expect in the case of a crime of violence or of professional thieving.

It was hoped that the sentence would be revised on appeal. No one who was present in the court when the appeal was heard would criticise the attitude of the judges on the bench. In two previous cases when they had to deal with charges of burglary and obtaining money under false pretences, the result was admirable. Reasonable laws were administered with justice and humanity. But in the de Montalk case the law which these humane judges had to administer was clearly a silly and irrational law. It was obvious that Montalk had done harm to no one. Yet the judges had to find him guilty of the same offence as some lewd ruffian who prints pornographic literature for sale in the shops of the underworld. These three judges, who as men of the world knew, of course, that in fact de Montalk had done nothing more heinous than any of us who tell our friends dirty stories, felt compelled by the law to keep this harmless individual in prison until his six months' sentence is completed.

It is no new doctrine that to show an obscenity to one other person is to publish an obscene libel. It was decided thirty-two years ago in the case of Vizetelly *versus* Mudies, Ltd., that publication may consist in "delivering or showing a writing to another person." But it has usually been held that certain safeguards provided against the absurd application of this law. In another case (R. *v.* Thompson) it was assumed that such questions as whether the "publication was with intent to corrupt public morals" should be taken into account in deciding a question of obscenity. But in view of the de Montalk decision (which will presumably go into the records of the Court of Criminal Appeal and form an important precedent) we must now assume that intention to corrupt public morals, which was certainly not present in this case, is not a necessary element in obscene libel.

The implications of this decision are very wide. A journalist who brings an article to an editor with the familiar remark, "I am not sure whether this is publishable, but you might look," is liable to prosecution for obscene libel if the editor cares to consult the police. An artist who paints a nude and offends the taste of the hanging committee may find himself in prison if a member of the committee reports him to the police. Every novelist who submits a new work has to run the risk that some person in the publishers' house may turn informer. The publisher may not have decided to publish it, the author may only have submitted an unexpurgated draft, but he may be guilty of an obscene libel in the eyes of the law. It seems odd that the Society of Authors should have shown no interest in this case.

It is clear that this is an intolerable state of affairs. We have permitted the law to remain in its present state so long because most people feel it desirable that the police should have some check upon the sale of pornographic literature and pictures. As far as obscene passages go, we know that every copy of the Bible, or of Juvenal, Aristophanes, Chaucer, or Shakespeare is obscene, but we rely upon a certain discretion in the enforcement of the law. Is the discretion in fact exercised? There are whole streets in the West End of London in which every other shop contains blatantly pornographic literature obviously displayed for commercial purposes. Yet the vendors of pornography are left alone. Why is the law enforced in the case of poems which never appeared, and which were never intended for publication in the usual sense, and not enforced in cases where money is being made by deliberately exciting sensuality and catering for perversion? What is the explanation for the leniency of the police on the one hand, and the savage treatment of an eccentric on the other?

The danger is very real. The police, hitherto usually restrained from absurd prosecutions by the knowledge that the Courts are unlikely to take seriously cases of obscenity where no intention to corrupt public morals is involved, can now proceed with the assurance that anything a jury may think indecent may be successfully prosecuted. What is safe? It is not long since the police found some of Blake's drawings in an exhibition and asked for a warrant against Mr. William Blake. Properly handled, most juries will say that any picture of the nude human form is obscene. But Blake was not prosecuted or condemned. He was dead. Surely an antique law which invited such absurdities and, in the case of the living such cruelties, should also be dead.

THE FUTURE OF THE POST OFFICE

THE Post Office is the largest publicly owned industry in Great Britain. It employs, in one way or another, a quarter of a million people; and it carries on a service which brings it into daily contact with every active citizen. If it does anything wrong, there are certain to be loud complaints and the fullest publicity; for everyone feels he has a special right to grumble at the shortcomings of a service which he partly owns. But, when things go well with such a service, people take them as a matter of course. Who ever praised the Post Office because it usually delivers letters safely and to time? And who ever wrote to the newspapers to express his satisfaction that the telephone exchange kept on giving him the right number?

The Post Office, even if it were run by highly efficient archangels, would get more blame than praise. But it is, on the whole, astonishing how little positive blame it gets. The telephone service, alone among the Post Office departments, comes in for serious criticism of its actual working, and it is in the nature of a telephone system to be peculiarly exasperating even under the best conditions. Apart from the telephones, the desire to reform the Post Office, while it is widespread, seems to be a good deal more *a priori* than based on definite criticism of its present working. Indeed, in view of the obvious *a priori* objections to certain features of its present administration, the service is in general remarkably efficient. That efficiency is high testimony to the quality of the workers engaged in it, and to the loyal spirit of public service which pervades it, despite the fact that the staff, as well as the general public, clearly loves a grumble.

The points on which critics of the present system usually fasten are obvious enough. First, the short tenure of the average Postmaster-General, which gives him barely time to find out how his department works before he is moved on somewhere else. Secondly, the system of Treasury control, under which the Post Office is treated, in matters of expenditure, as if it were an ordinary spending department of the Civil Service instead of a great revenue-producing business concern. Thirdly, the provision by which any surplus accumulated by the Post Office lapses automatically to the Exchequer at the end of the financial year, and the service is thus prevented from building up reserve funds, or economising at one time in order to spend more freely at another. Fourthly, the sharp division between the secretary's office and the main body of postal workers, with different methods of recruitment and promotion which lead to a caste division within the personnel of the service, and go far to destroy the sense of corporate solidarity in the higher grades. And fifthly, the inclusion of the Post Office accounts in the Budget in such a way as to make very difficult any real estimate of its financial position and business success.

All these criticisms are familiar, and of long standing. They are all, in our view, valid. We see no reason why the Post Office should have at its head a Minister not merely responsible for it to Parliament, but supposed to take direct charge of its working. We would sooner see the office of Postmaster-General merged with other functions in a Ministry responsible for the supervision of a wider range of publicly owned or publicly controlled services, such as the Ministry of Transport. In that case the Minister would, of course, cease even nominally to run the service. It would have to be placed under some sort of board or commission similar to the Central Electricity Board, the members being appointed and removable by the Minister, and the ultimate control of policy remaining in the Government's hands.

Treasury control, as it now exists, ought to be abolished, and the Post Office given far more freedom in spending its revenue, subject to proper audit of its accounts. Treasury control may be well enough for an administrative department such as the Ministry of Health. It is obviously unsuitable as a method of overseeing the day-to-day operations of a great productive business. The Post Office ought to have much more financial autonomy; and an essential part of such autonomy is the power to carry over surpluses from year to year. The State has a perfect right to tax the surpluses of the Post Office, but its tax ought to be fixed or limited, and ought not to be at the rate of 100 per cent. The Post Office should have reasonable freedom to accumulate reserves and apply them to the development of the service, and its accounts ought to be taken right out of the Budget, and presented in the form of a business balance-sheet and statement of profit and loss.

Finally, the relation of the secretary's office to the rest of the personnel ought to be recast. A real effort ought to be made to enlist the Post Office workers to share in the working control of the service, so as to increase their sense of responsibility for its efficient conduct. With this object, the Whitley Councils, which are just being revived after a period of abeyance, ought to be greatly developed and given more authority. The postal associations, in return for this collaborative attitude of the administration, ought to recognise frankly that promotion throughout the service must be by merit and not by seniority, and that the method of parliamentary lobbying in order to get their conditions improved is obsolete, and will have to be given up in favour of a direct system of consultation and negotiation—as it has in effect largely been given up already.

All these reforms can, and should, be carried through without in any way interfering with the status of the Post Office as a public service conducted by and on behalf of the State. The right objective of postal reform is not to make the postal service as like private business enterprise as possible. It is already ahead in efficiency of the average private enterprise. The aim should be to create a new model of public enterprise, both for its own sake and as an example that can be followed, *mutatis mutandis*, in other services which may come hereafter to be socialised.

There comes the rub. For the great body of Conservative Members of Parliament who have been pressing for postal reform, and have just got three "supermen" appointed as a committee to recommend how it is to be carried through, assuredly do not want to make the reformed Post Office a working model of socialisation. They hate it just because it is now, however imperfectly, such a model. They want to go as near as they can to hauling it back to private enterprise because they are hostile to the idea and principle of socialisation. They have succeeded already, under a previous Government, in wresting the beam wireless service from public control, and handing it over to a company based on private shareholding. They would dearly love, if they dared, to do the same thing to the Post Office as a whole, or at the least to the telephones as an independent section. They would like to do this, not because they can show that the Post Office is inefficient, but on political, or rather capitalist, grounds.

This must not be allowed to happen. Fortunately, it will probably be found that it is administratively impracticable to separate the telephones from the rest of the postal services, and any attempt openly to denationalise the Post Office as a whole would meet with too much opposition to be successfully carried through. The danger is that the new Committee, while preserving the form of public ownership, may attempt to remodel the working of the service on lines which are only appropriate to a private profit-making business. The Post Office is not only a business, but also an organisation which undertakes many non-business services on behalf of the State, and is likely, with its far-flung branch organisation, to have to take on many more. These services cannot, and should not, be separated from its work as a carrier of letters and an organiser

of the means of communication. It is a convenience to the public to have all these services grouped together in the same buildings, and an economy to work them all by means of a single staff. The unity of the postal services must not be broken up, and that means that the Post Office must remain an essentially national concern.

The need for reform, however, exists, and the friends of the Post Office will do it the worst possible service if they now take fright at the danger of "denationalisation," and pretend that no changes at all need to be made. We hope that not only the postal associations, but also the Labour Party, will present full and constructive evidence to the Committee, embodying a positive and concrete scheme of reorganisation. For those who believe in public enterprise cannot afford to be content with generalities. Lord Bridgeman's committee confronts them with a definite challenge, which they will need to meet with a clear and well-considered plan.

A LONDON DIARY

IT is sad to think that the death of Aristide Briand can have little effect for good or bad upon the politics of France and Europe. The days when one could still hope that he might influence history have passed. He was a great figure, a great politician, but, unfortunately, not what all the papers of the world are now calling him, either a great man or a great statesman. That is why, though he was eleven times Prime Minister, he has left little or no mark upon the events of his age and will become for history nothing more than a name. He belonged to the best type of successful politician which democracy threw up in France, Germany, and Britain during the first two decades of this century. Springing from the lower or lower middle classes, extremely clever and ambitious, he drifted naturally into journalism and the law, and thence to politics. He knew nothing, it was said of him, but understood everything. His instincts and temperament made him a Socialist, but he was too good a politician not to pass, in the France of the early twentieth century, from Socialism to Liberalism. Though he was always on what I should call the right side —i.e., the Left—he became such a master of the art of politics that he seemed to forget everything else in his delight in the skilful manipulation of men and parties. He was like one of those virtuosos to whom eventually all music becomes the same, merely material for the display of their superb technique. Briand failed to lead France along the road of peace and conciliation, though he often succeeded in remaining Foreign Secretary when all his colleagues and a majority of the Chamber wanted him to resign. Personally, he was charming and his wit was as brilliant as his oratory. The following is a characteristic example of this sardonic wit: "J'ai connu," he once remarked to an English colleague of Sir Alfred Mond, "beaucoup de mondes—le grand monde, par exemple, et le demimonde—contre tous les mondes et contre tout le monde on peut dire quelque chose, mais le plus immonde monde de tous ces mondes est Mond."

* * *

No man was ever abused more venomously or persistently than was Briand in 1930-31. The extreme Nationalists had always hated him, and the "Hitler election" in the autumn of 1930, following upon the evacuation of the Rhineland, gave them a perfect opportunity for attacking the whole Briand policy of conciliation with Germany. The campaign conducted in the Royalist *Action Française* and the *Echo de Paris* finally ruined his career and probably hastened his death. Ridicule, the merciless ridicule which is peculiarly French, was more powerful than invective. The *Action Française* set out to make Briand ridiculous—his appearance, voice, accent, education, father and mother even, were made ridiculous. They raked up his past, and M. Givet, a Royalist journalist, wrote a Life of Briand, stating that he was born and brought up in a sailors' brothel. He was a *maquereau*—the most ignominious of all professions—when he was not a traitor. They ridiculed his ignorance, digging up the old Separation Bill, the historical introduction of which was supposed to have been written by Briand, and probably really by an incompetent journalistic friend who knew as little Church history as Briand himself. In an unfortunate passage he referred to the Council of Trent as the *Conseil des Trente*, and, according to the Royalist anecdote, Briand, anxious to show all the learning possible, asked its author to include a complete list of the thirty men who composed the Council of Trent.

* * *

Then there was the even more effective *Echo de Paris*, with Pertinax's brilliant attacks, supported by the genius of Sennep, the caricaturist. Pertinax saw Briand not as a traitor, but as a duffer who was so anxious to retain France's "pacifist reputation" that he permitted France to be cheated at every international conference by the British, the Germans—by anyone with anything to get out of France. Sennep's caricatures ridiculed his age, his "senile debility," and in October, 1930, began the long series of pictures of Briand in decay. "Autumn has Come" showed him as a mouldy old tree shedding its leaves and branches—his arms, legs and features—in the storm. The eastern wind —the wind from Germany—continued to shake the Briand tree, and the Austro-German Zollverein gave it the *coup de grâce*. In a speech on the Zollverein, Briand first betrayed signs of embarrassment and loss of nerve. His position had become untenable, and he sought escape from the Quai d'Orsay by the dignified exit to the Presidency. The campaign doubled in violence. After his defeat, when he had disappointed the Radicals and Socialists by remaining impotent at the Quai d'Orsay, his enemies were content with contemptuous jibes. Sennep showed him as a cigarette end mouldering on the floor. "*Le Feu qui s'éteint.*" A friend who saw Briand at the League Council in Paris in November described him to me then as a broken man. A glance was enough to dispel the stories that he was to arise again and lead the Left. He could scarcely walk, and when he spoke he coughed and choked and gasped for air and sipped Vittel water after every few words. As he tottered to his chair a stentorian voice came from the back of the audience: "*Regardez, regardez! Il marche! Il marche!*" It was, so I am told, Pertinax, giving the old lion a last kick. In France political antagonism has no mercy for illness or old age.

* * *

Very few people realise how odd and how dangerous our constitutional position is, and I am not surprised to see that Professor Laski is being attacked for calling attention to its oddity and its danger. The arguments in his pamphlet, *The Crisis and the Constitution* (Hogarth Press, 1s. 6d.), are easier to sneer at than to answer. The essence of the situation is that our whole Constitution depends on a party organisation which is not formally recognised. What is the Prime Minister? Theoretically a minister chosen by the King to form a ministry. But why is he chosen? Because he is the leader of the most powerful Parliamentary party. Occasionally, as in the case of Curzon or Mr. Baldwin, this may leave the King a personal choice between two ministers. But by destroying the party system Mr. MacDonald has created quite a new set of problems. He is a Prime Minister without any substantial House of Commons backing. Has he the usual right to demand a dissolution as an alternative to resignation? Does not the situation bring the personal will of the King back into politics in a way which has been unknown at least for a century? In the same way the relationship of the Prime Minister to his

colleagues in the Cabinet and to his opponents is completely changed by the destruction of the automatic machinery of the party system. Of course, Mr. Laski does not regard that system as sacrosanct any more than I do. But there are some nasty shocks ahead for the British public unless someone has the honesty to explain that a constitutional revolution has been carried out—or should I say begun?—under cover of a national emergency.

* * *

I was returning to London from the South Coast the other day and driving my car at a leisurely thirty miles an hour up the Streatham High Road, when suddenly at Norbury Station immediately under the two front wheels I observed two long white lines drawn across the road. Only then was I aware of a light signal by the side of the road with the red light showing. I then for the first time discovered that this was a new, isolated light signal which can be used by the foot passenger himself to stop the traffic. I am all in favour of the light signals for controlling motor traffic when they are applied to a whole road. They have greatly improved, for instance, conditions in Oxford Street. But to put a solitary light signal in a dozen or more miles of crowded main road is extremely dangerous. The eye of the skilled motorist has become trained to pick out unconsciously from the kaleidoscope of road and pavement only those things, persons, and movements which experience has taught him may require from him immediate attention—the car ahead of him which, he feels instinctively, is not quite sure whether it is going to pull in or pull out; the policeman at the next cross-road; the two small boys struggling on the kerb; the old lady hesitating on the next refuge; the tram-line which twenty yards ahead changes from double to single. Where the light signals are a general system, the eye is ready to register their warnings. It cannot be ready to pick up in time the warning if you put one solitary light in a twelve-mile stretch of main South London road.

* * *

In the Fifty Years series in the *Times*, Mary Countess of Lovelace, writes of society in the 'seventies :

> Nearly every social custom which applied to ordinary intercourse between both sexes was based on the idea that every young woman, and especially every inexperienced girl, was a sacred thing to be carefully guarded from any possibility of insult or *undue* temptation.

The word " undue " (my italics) is superb.

CRITIC.

RAYS *VERSUS* THE KNIFE

AT long last we may expect the achievement of some release, some relief, and an era of treatment less futile and cruel, more hopeful and more scientific in the treatment of cancer. The argument to which current events have drawn public attention has been stated and restated in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and elsewhere, by this pen, for a decade and more, with ever-increasing urgency, whilst the death-rate of cancer steadily rose, and the evidence for radiation became yearly more cogent. That argument, which will ere long receive authoritative vindication, must now be summarised in its present form.

The surgery of cancer is, on the whole, a ghastly failure. The extension of operative methods, making them more " radical," has not met with the expected success, and the limits of such extension have admittedly been reached. The patients continue to die after one or more recurrences, and the immediate fatalities are much more numerous. The most abominable record is that of Wertheim's operation for cancer of the womb, the results of which are immediately fatal in about a third of all cases, to say nothing of the lamentable subsequent mortality.

Radium has been known for a generation or so to cure rodent ulcer, the least deadly form of malignant growth. Since the war observation, in Germany especially at first, has shown that " hard " X-rays are useful in the treatment of cancer, notably of the womb. The effective agent, when radium kills a morbid growth, is the so-called *gamma* radiation, which is none other than an extremely " hard " form of X-rays. In general, therefore, radiation by such rays—whether produced by radium or an X-ray tube is not the question—has come to challenge the priority and monopoly of the knife in the treatment of cancer. Radiation has no immediate fatality under proper conditions, it is immeasurably less disagreeable to the patient, and its end results, in the most frequent forms of cancer, have now come to equal or surpass those of surgery.

With very rare and practically negligible exceptions, the surgeons have opposed the new method, particularly in this country, which has allowed Erlangen, a little town in Bavaria, and later Paris and Stockholm, to take the lead. The radiologists have never been given anything like a fair chance here. Until very recently, even the Radium Institute and the superbly equipped radiological department at the Middlesex Hospital were only allowed to see cases after the surgeons had done their best and worst. Cancer was a " surgical disease," and the radiologist was called in by the surgeon only when and if he thought fit. The patient, as a rule, had no choice and no defence. Until very recently —to be precise, until the fact was stated in these columns and a new era was inaugurated by my exposure of them—a woman with cancer of the breast who entered the Middlesex Hospital would be told, in so many words, " You must have an operation or you will die." Only if, despite this awful threat, she refused, had she the chance of going to the X-ray department. To-day, she may take her choice from the first.

In 1928, an International Cancer Conference was held in London. Once and for all, the papers there read, and, for instance, the cases of tongue cancer treated by radium at the Westminster Hospital shown in connection with the Conference, established in all disinterested minds the place of radiation. For many years in these columns I have laid down the principle—too generous, in fact, to the surgeons to-day and perhaps for years past—that the radiologist ought to be regarded as the absolute equal of the surgeon in all cases of cancer, which should be seen from the first by both specialists in equal consultation. (I am, of course, neither surgeon nor radiologist.)

In the treatment of cancer of the womb, of the tongue and of the skin, radiation is already the proved superior of the knife : and that is indeed much too narrow a statement. It means that, as I have steadily maintained here for many years, surgical operations have been and are being performed which ought not to be performed. Now, apropos the question what to do with the " radium bomb " in the possession of the Radium Commission, which was set up when the advocates of radiation could no longer be resisted, a letter has appeared above the signatures of six men of the highest standing and repute, and in its course the following sentence occurs : *

> It must be recognised that in this country a large number of operations are still being done which, in view of the possibilities held out by radiological treatment, are no longer justifiable.

That is the truth, as here taught for many years, but as never until now so formidably published. We must be grateful to the " radium bomb," whatever its results hitherto or its fate. It has led to the demand for an impartial and authoritative inquiry, which will be undertaken by the medical profession and with the avowed

* The *Times*, Feb. 17th, 1932.

support of Lords Dawson and Moynihan. That inquiry, however, will not be limited to a discussion of the relative merits of larger and smaller units of radium. It will necessarily consider the "scientific aspects of radiotherapy," and will study and compare the results of radiation by various methods. The results of surgery cannot escape submission to comparison meanwhile; and the unjustifiable character not merely of such an outrageous procedure as Wertheim's operation, but of most of the countless every-day operations will be demonstrated.

In 1906, a leading surgeon wrote a book, for a medical series which I was editing, to ask the public to come for operation in time. It failed, and all subsequent appeals of the kind have failed. Our skin and flesh fear the knife. One great boon of the supersession of the knife by radiation is that, the awful fear of operation being allayed, cases of cancer will, at last, begin to be seen early, many of them before secondary inaccessible growths have developed. We may begin to see an arrest, at least, of the long-continued rise in the cancer death-rate. (The disease now kills someone in England and Wales alone about every nine minutes.)

None of all this is of any very serious importance compared with another question which, it would almost appear, interests no one, in the profession or out of it: and that is the prevention of a very large proportion of all cancer by the application of the knowledge of its causation which we already possess. It would seem that, in order to that end, we need a new kind of medical profession with a new kind of education and economic conditions, and an entirely new kind of public—scarcely visible even by this rose-tinted and would-be telescopic LENS.

THE BORE

I WAS sitting on a high stool at the bar of a public house near the Strand, waiting for a friend who was late for the appointment. Men stood or sat, singly or in twos or threes, at intervals round the bar, drinking and looking as if they were prepared to go on drinking for some time to come. A little man came in through the swing doors and peered about as though searching for someone. He had an actor's face and a saint's blue eyes, and was obviously doing his best to maintain an appearance of respectability despite the fact that every piece of clothing he wore, from his overcoat to his collar, was frayed beyond recovery. He approached the bar, and, when a glass of bitter was placed before him, he slowly drew off one of his aged gloves and, taking five pennies one by one out of his ticket pocket, laid them in a row on the counter. The barmaid having taken them, he turned to a man beside him who was drinking in solitude and spoke to him. The man nodded as if unwilling to be drawn into a conversation. The little actor went on talking till the other man, with a frightened expression, swallowed the remains of his drink at a draught and hastened out of the bar.

The little actor smiled and brought out a pipe. On his left side, three men, with the sparkling eyes of intimates who were thoroughly enjoying themselves, were engrossed in conversation. The little man approached them, touching the bowl of his pipe, with a request for a match. Having got the match, he went on talking to them. They nodded impatiently, and went on with their own conversation. The little man addressed one of them individually, who happened to have the weakest chin of the three, and, having got a civil answer from him, began to talk volubly. The other two glanced round apprehensively, and one of them said: "Let's get out." The three men swallowed their drinks hurriedly, took off their hats to the barmaid, and disappeared.

The little actor's pipe had gone out, and he sidled up to two other men who were drinking large whiskies-and-soda. They gave him a match, but kept their backs turned to him. He stretched his arm between them in order to put the dead match on to an ash-tray, apologised, and made this an excuse for entering into conversation with them. They looked angry, did all in their power to snub him, but in the end they, too, began to wear a frightened expression, bolted their drinks at a rate at which double whiskies ought not to be bolted, and escaped from the bar.

And so it went on—the sponger's progress—till every group of drinkers and every solitary drinker round the bar, except myself had fled from the scene in terror or disgust. It was as though even the most reluctant home-goer had decided that home was better than this. I realised that I was to be the next victim even before the little man came up to me with a request for a match. He then began to tell me how he and Henry Irving had once been out on the Downs near Brighton on a stormy day with only one match between them and no shelter, and how, nevertheless, they had managed to light two cigars. "That match," he declared, "was worth its weight in gold." He accepted a drink, and went on to tell more stories about Henry Irving. Most of them seemed to me to have no point at all, and I ceased to listen to them, wondering when my friend would arrive. "I hope I'm not boring you," said the little man at the end of one of them. I lied, and assured him he was not. He looked rather depressed and said that, no doubt, I was interested in the stage. I told him that I had once wished to be an actor. "Ah," he said sadly, "the profession's done. Killed by bad trade. This gold standard business—what do you make of it?" I replied that I could not make head or tail of it. "I think," he said, brightening up, "I can explain it to you. You see if all the gold in the world is held by France and America"—and he went on with the most extraordinary rigmarole about gold and sterling which clearly meant nothing to him and which made my brain whirl when I listened to it. I gathered that he had a theory that gas-stoves, and not gold, ought to be the medium of exchange, and that this would make the financial position of England unassailable. And whatever he said he said in so boring a voice that one's whole being sagged from the waist upwards.

He passed from the currency to the Chinese situation, described with infinite tediousness the exogamous customs of some tribe in Uganda, reeled off a list of all the Derby winners since 1850, turned to Shakespeare and told me the dates (right or wrong, I know not) of all the plays, and discussed half a dozen other subjects in a fashion and in a voice so wearisome that the beads of sweat stood on my temples. And at intervals he interrupted himself to express the hope that he was not boring me. Longing for the appearance of my friend, I replied with an increasingly feeble "No."

The little man was by now beginning to look rather wild, and he, too, was perspiring at the temples. "I fancy," he said, "you are the same type as poor old Phil May—never like to go home." I protested my profound domesticity. "Poor old Phil," he murmured. "He loved his home, too, but it used to take him a long time to get there. I remember leaving the 'Alsatians' with him once at two o'clock in the morning, and Phil insisted on showing me home to Clapham in his hansom, though he himself lived at Ealing. He was soused, properly soused, that night, and tried to persuade the cabby to let him drive. The cabby was a bit soused, too, but he wasn't soused enough for that. I was the only one of the three, I may say, who was"—he checked a hiccough with an apology—"approximately sober. When we got into the hansom, Phil and I discovered that neither of us had any money. And Phil simply laughed—he was a funny fellow, Phil—and said that it didn't matter, and that there was a silver soup-tureen in the house he simply hated the sight of, and he would give that to the cabby to sell the next morning for whatever it would fetch. And the funny thing is that when I called on Phil the next morning he

had forgotten all about the soup tureen. But, when he went to look for it, it was gone. I'm not boring you am I? "

" Not at all," I said gloomily. " Have another drink." The little man raised both arms above his head sadly and said : " Kamerad ! You've beaten me." Seeing that I looked puzzled, he went on : " You have been very hospitable to me to-night, and I will let you into a secret. I am not what I seem. Probably you take me for a common sponger." I shook my head. " On the contrary," he declared, " I am here on business. You may not believe me, but I entered this bar as the paid agent of the newly formed Society for the Scientific Promotion of Temperance." Again I looked puzzled, and he went on : " As everybody knows, all the old temperance movements are dead. You cannot make men sober by preaching at them and singing Band of Hope hymns. Nor is anybody likely to listen to a lot of women getting on to a platform and denouncing public houses. As for Prohibition, everybody now knows that it's simply a method of encouraging crime. Realising this, a number of rich men and women interested in the cause of temperance recently met in a house in Park Lane, and discussed the possibility of some new means of making war on the drink traffic. Just when they were about to give up in despair, an elderly peer who had in earlier life been a frequenter of Jimmy's and the long bar at the Cri. said : ' I know. We can't use force to prevent people from going into pubs and we can't persuade them by any reasonable means to come out. But we can bore them out.' ' How so? ' asked a duchess. ' If you knew as much about pubs as I do,' said the peer to her, ' you would know that there's nothing drinkers hate more than the stranger who comes up to them in a bar, whether for the purpose of sponging or of joining in. My proposal is, then, to organise and train a band of a hundred professional spongers, bores, joiners and taggers-on, and let them loose on the public-houses of London. We must organise classes for them in which they will be instructed in the art of inane volubility, obviously lying and silly anecdotes, incoherent political exposition, and all the tricks of tediousness, from sponging for matches down to deadly soporific voice-production. That, ladies and gentlemen, is the only scientific method of emptying the public-houses and carrying the cause of temperance to triumph.'

" Well, sir," said the little actor, " to cut a long story short, the proposal was carried by acclamation, and to-night the first dozen spongers, bores, joiners and taggers-on are taking the public-houses in the Strand in detail. I, myself, have been assigned three public-houses for the evening, and you may have noticed how successful I was in this bar until I had driven away everybody but you, and with you—I say it to my shame—I failed utterly. My conversation, I may say without boasting, would have bored any other human being into a madhouse, but, somehow or other, I could not bore you." " Oh, yes," I assured him " you could and did bore me, but I could not go away as I was waiting for an important appointment with a friend who is late." " You mean that? " cried the little man, his face brightening. " I do," I told him. He clasped me by the hand and shook it warmly. " Heaven be praised ! " he exclaimed; " I was beginning to think I was a failure." I pressed another drink on him. " Might it be a double brandy? " he asked. " My next job is at the ' Feather in the Cap,' where the clientele is of a rougher class and likely to be more bore-proof." When he had finished his drink, he again shook me by the hand and said : " For both our sakes, I hope we shall not meet again. It's too hard work for both of us. Besides, if one of our inspectors came in and saw you looking interested in the appalling drivel I've got to talk he'd probably give me the sack." " It never can happen again," I assured him ; " the next time I meet you, I'm going to let you win."

Y. Y.

THE NEW GOOD SAMARITAN

Czechoslovakia had always supported the French policy at Geneva.—M. Tardieu.

THE Good Samaritan is out of date,
Who, pitying his neighbour's hopeless fate,
Bound up his wounds and poured in oil and wine,
In mere good will, with no deep-laid design.
To influence his contracts or his vote
(So runs the tale that children learn by rote);
So destitute of any politic plan,
He sought no safeguards from the wounded man.
We, with more prudence, ere we staunch the flow
From neighbours' wounds, demand our *quid pro quo;*
Nay, ere we grant them licence to unite.
To remedy themselves, their desperate plight,
We seek assurance that their cure implies
No tampering with the systems *we* devise;
No base subservience to assisting Powers
(Unless that aid, that dominance, be *ours*).
But when that State implores of us a loan
Whose policy takes colour from our own,
And even at Geneva backs our scheme,
To be, in fact, the Super-State we dream,
Freely we lend; for friends are best, we hold,
When " grappled to our soul " with hoops of gold.
Prudence and pity thus hold equal weight—
The Good Samaritan is out of date.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(We are again only able to publish a small selection of our correspondence on this subject. Will correspondents be as brief as possible?—ED. N. S. & N.)

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I add my evidence to Mr. Mortimer's? My experience at an "old Public School " was the same as his. Probably things have improved since those pre-war years. Conditions as bad as they were cannot last. They tend to breed their own anti-toxin. But what is to prevent a relapse? The Public School system seems to be based on two grave psychological mistakes, (first) the prefect system—that adolescents are fit to oversee, control and punish pre-adolescents. All children tend to be unduly hard on each other, and when to their natural intolerance are added the irritations and bewilderments of oncoming adolescence, made doubly hard by the ignorance and timidity of their teachers, any adolescent put in authority has an overwhelming temptation to abuse it. He may restrain the temptation, as a judge whose salary is always in arrear may resist bribes. The point is that he should not be put in such a position of strain. The other mistake is training by beating. Not only is it undesirable that an adolescent should have this power. It is undesirable that any teacher should have it. At the International Congress on Penology in 1924 the only authority who defended beating even for criminals owned that the punishment was so undesirable for those who inflicted it that the victim should be beaten by a machine.

GERALD HEARD.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have not yet had the pleasure of reading Mr. Pekin's book, but some remarks in Mr. Raymond Mortimer's review seem to ask for comment. I think that the total abolition of corporal punishment would mean more unhappiness in the sum. The only alternative punishment for a really idle boy would be long detention—which is, I believe, the remedy adopted in France. For real idleness and as a last resort in other emergencies there is, at any rate, a reasonable case for corporal punishment.

Organised and legalised fagging, *constantly* inquired into and checked by the head master and housemasters, prevents that unauthorised fagging which can easily occur when boys of different ages and sizes live together. The classical instance is the way in which Flashman and the Fifth fagged Tom Brown and his friends. Even in families unauthorised fagging occurs.

Mr. Mortimer puts his finger on the weak spot when he condemns the practically unlimited powers of caning that are sometimes allowed to prefects. There is usually a right of appeal to a master, but in practice this is useless. I believe that no individual prefect nor any body of house prefects should ever have power to cane. It should be allowed only to *school* prefects and then only after leave has been obtained from the head master, who can interview the accused and also his housemaster, if he wishes. Under such a system the number of canings by prefects will decrease by about 99 per cent.

The source of most trouble in Public Schools is the weak housemaster who is not up to his job. He is the result of promotion by seniority. Sometimes a strong head master passes over the next on the list and makes an appointment by merit, but the resulting friction with the staff may do as much harm to the general interests of the school as a bad housemaster. It ought to be made clear to every master when he joins a school that promotion to a housemastership, with its responsibilities, its amenities and its emoluments, will only be given if the head master is assured that he will be able to grapple with his task. Only if other things are equal should seniority count. But whether housemasters are strong or weak, the powers of prefects as described by Mr. Mortimer should be drastically curtailed.

Finally, may I suggest to Mr. Mortimer that on reflection he might like to modify his statement that the average senior master is often a repressed homosexual? Surely no man is in a position to say such a thing about hundreds of people, most of whom he cannot know even by sight.

C. H. TREMLETT,
Head Master.

King's School, Bruton,
Somerset.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is natural that housemasters should rise to champion the system for which they stand, just as it is in their interests to reassure with phrases the parents of unhappy boys. I do not doubt, however, that their championing is often sincere, for I believe that, in many cases, housemasters do not and cannot know exactly what goes on in their houses.

Masters may have changed within the last ten years, but boys have not, and as long as the prefectorial system reigns it will be abused. The Public Schools, surely, must be judged by their effects on the minority rather than the majority, and I submit that there is something radically wrong with a system which can allow any boy to spend five years of his life in a state of physical and mental fear so continuous as to absorb all his faculties.

This, Sir, was my own experience at Winchester.

26A Yeoman's Row, S.W.3. PATRICK BALFOUR.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is somewhat difficult to find one's bearings in the raw and strident world of the Public Schools as pictured by Mr. Raymond Mortimer. He makes offensive detailed statements which it would be easy to refute; but I am not concerned with his article as a whole, but with the challenge which concludes it. He asserts that "intellectual integrity, freedom from prejudice, sensitiveness to beauty, and moral courage" are "not only not taught but are definitely discouraged at Public Schools." This was certainly not my experience as a boy at Eton, when it was my great good fortune to be brought into touch—to name no other men—with H. E. Luxmoore and A. C. Benson. To say that these qualities were not "taught" by such men as these would show ignorance of what true education means: no doubt they were seldom "taught" directly, but they were part of the impact of their personalities, and no one who knew these men well could fail to receive the impress. There is no better teaching than this.

Nor does my later experience as a master allow me to share the pessimism of Mr. Mortimer. If it is possible at a Public School for the Lambeth Report to be studied in school, for stained glass windows to be designed and in part executed by boys, and for public instruction of the finest and most vital character to be given in Art and Music, how can it be maintained that boys are discouraged from entering new fields of thought and creative effort? On these and kindred subjects the best teaching, the only teaching, is given by men who themselves have a spark of the sacred fire: and such men are not lacking at the Public Schools.

ROBERT QUIRK.

Southgate House, Winchester.

ARCHBISHOP TEMPLE AND ARTICLE 231

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I learn with great regret from the *Times* issue of March 7th that the League of Nations Union is circulating a very full extract from Archbishop Temple's sermon at Geneva on Art. 231 of the Versailles Treaty. Do the Archbishop and the Union really think this is a way of impressing foreigners or promoting international harmony? I don't wish to give an opinion either way on the question of whether Germany was, or was not, guilty of causing the war. I wish to say that that is not what Art. 231 of the German Treaty says. Since November, 1931, the war guilt interpretation of that article has been frequently discussed abroad and widely challenged. MM. Renouvin and Bloch—two well-known authorities—sent me their latest pamphlet on the subject on Saturday last; for months there has been keen discussion in Germany headed by the redoubtable Dr. Alfred von Wegerer. Many of the Germans and French in the congregation at Geneva must have been amazed at the Archbishop's omission to refer to this interpretation. Now the League of Nations Union has joined with the Archbishop; both are absolutely behind the times—they are the Rip Van Winkles of the controversy. What they apparently do not know is that the war guilt charge is contained in the Treaty, but not where they say it is.

Full details are given in the German Treaty (H.M. Stationery Office, 1920, 2s. 6d.), which includes the Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to Germany on June 16th, 1919. After reading this reply the Germans signed the Treaty. This makes it clear that the interpretation of Art. 231 is that given by Mr. Wickham Steed in a letter to the *Times* on Feb. 9th, 1932. It is merely a technical plea to justify exaction of money and goods from Germany. The war guilt charge is elsewhere. The Allied Reply (V. pp. 239–40, 271, 273, 275) definitely interprets the Treaty as a whole as charging Germany with war guilt. It also makes quite clear that the Penalties Section (Art. 227–230, Trial of War Criminals and of the German Emperor) can be so interpreted.

In basing his statements on Art. 231, the Archbishop has elected to stand on ground which is disputed, and to abandon ground which is certain. It is most deplorable that the League of Nations Union, after a long public discussion, should endorse this position. Such action can only reveal to erudite foreigners an ignorance not only of the Peace Treaty, but of their opinions. It repeats in an extreme form an opinion of Art. 231 which was really beginning to be discredited, and which never could have been held by those knowing the facts.

Though present in Paris during 1919, and acquainted at the time and since with the whole discussion, I might well distrust my own opinion as being affected by the events. But this opinion as to war guilt in the Treaty, as to the Allied Reply, as to Arts. 227–30, and as to Art. 231, was held by the late Sir Ernest Satow. Not only was he an authority of almost unrivalled distinction as to the theory and practice of International Law, but he held at the time what few diplomats ever hold, a position of complete detachment. On several occasions he went over all these points with me in detail and, though always careful in expressing an opinion, left no doubt that his interpretation would be what I have stated. I live in hopes that it may be adopted by the Archbishop and the League of Nations Union.

Peterhouse, Cambridge. HAROLD TEMPERLEY.

A NATIONAL LABOUR PARTY?

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Horrabin asks me, where are the constituencies in which the working-class vote is in a minority? May I refer him to the census returns, or to an article upon this subject which I published in the now defunct *Socialist Review* in January, 1927? Very briefly, the published figures show that two-thirds of the working-class—which is roughly represented by those persons who are insured under National Health Insurance schemes—is concentrated into eleven densely populated areas. These areas contain approximately 284 Parliamentary constituencies, which leaves 331 constituencies over which one-third of the working-class vote is much more thinly spread. And in these again the working-class vote is largely concentrated in one or two lesser industrial areas. The result is that over slightly more than half the con-

stituencies the working-class vote is likely to average out at less than half the electorate.

Mr. Rowse's rejoinder to my article, though only occasionally relevant to it, is interestingly characteristic of the Labour apologia of the moment. Specially revealing is his almost unintentional comparison of the present condition of the Labour Party, as disciplined by the caucus bosses, with the Roman Catholic Church in its severest mood. S.S.I.P. and all, they are entirely free to speculate and inquire—provided that they "accept the assumptions" of the caucus and "make themselves reasoned instruments" of the bosses' will. And dutifully does Mr. Rowse, for his part, ingeminate the sterile old incantations. "A more active part" for the Unions in the future; in the crisis "it was a Trade Unionist, Arthur Henderson, who rallied the movement to its true sense of direction"—the direction which lost it well over eighty per cent. of its seats. Mr. Rowse tells us that "these people" (that is, those Socialists who did not come to heel at the crack of the caucus whip) "come into the movement thinking to lay down the law to it." He is mistaken. Unluckily it is only now, at the eleventh hour, when Labour has almost signed its own death-warrant, that we are beginning to be vocal. Between 1918 and 1931 some of us were spending more time at the street corners than in drawing up paper commonwealths. For the last twenty years indeed has it not been Mr. Cole and his gifted associates who have been giving us almost weekly those changing, but always narrowly sectional, Utopias which have done so much to alienate potential converts to Socialism? For the tragedy of Socialism has been that it has never been given a chance: always there has been some irrelevant shibboleth to scare off the would-be supporter. In the old days atheism or revolution, now the caucus and "these gentlemen are our bosses." And yet men and women of all parties are hungry for the unrancorous constructive idealism of the true Socialist idea—if only they were not so effectually debarred from it by the *chevaux de frise* of irrelevant tabus erected by its self-appointed exponents.

Such portions of Mr. Rowse's article as bear upon my contentions I have already, I think, by anticipation answered much more fully than I could attempt to here in a pamphlet *Towards the New Labour Party* which is on the eve of publication.

Greenways, GODFREY ELTON.
Old Headington, Oxford.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. A. L. Rowse's reply to Mr. Godfrey Elton's apologia for "National Labour" is as adequate as one could wish; but many Socialists—not all of them right-wingers—and many more potential Socialists, are likely to rub their eyes in astonishment at one sentence. Recruits to the Labour movement, he says, must enter it "accepting its assumptions, to make themselves reasoned instruments of its will. When you join the Catholic Church you do not do so in order to contribute the interesting and variegated notions you may hold about the Deity to it, but to accept the terms it lays down and then to make your contribution to the working out of its purposes." Really! And whose is this infallible doctrine which no novice may presume to criticise? Who, in this Socialist Church, is the Pope? However thoroughly we may in practice agree with Mr. Rowse and disagree with Mr. Elton, we cannot help preferring the British Labour movement as it is—democratic, tolerant, and undogmatic—to the theological rigours and bell-book-and-candle excommunications of the Marxist or Leninist creed. Indeed, it is not too much to say that if Labour in this country ever does take on continental rigidity, it will forfeit all prospects of that union of "all workers by hand or brain" which Mr. Rowse, like the rest of us, so ardently desires. HONOR CROOME.

65 St. George's Square.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I ought to thank Professor Zimmern for his kind comment on my book; for his letter is in reply to that, rather than to my article. And it enables me to make clearer a point that is liable to be much misunderstood by Professor Zimmern among others.

When I advocate, as I do in my book, an understanding of politics on the basis of Marxism for the Labour movement, I am advocating it as a way of *understanding* politics, not as a hide-bound scheme of tactics on the one hand, nor as a system of dead dogma on the other. I wish to get the Labour movement to think of politics on Marxist lines, for I am sure that would give it a vital clue to its meaning, and would provide it with a significant and unifying trend of thought, which is what it most stands in need of. But I am clear that such a conception of political activity, in order to be effective in the circumstances, must be flexible, capable of adaptation and, still more, capable of further development. It is possible that it may have to make terms with the characteristic and radical empiricism of the English people. The value of such a conception is in that it remedies empiricism on the one hand, which without this essential sense of direction degenerates into mere opportunism, with a general conception of political ends, which, when left to itself, is liable to become a hardened system of dogma out of all relation to facts and circumstances.

It must be Professor Zimmern's long experience of continental politics that leads him to suppose that my view would involve the Labour movement in the fatal consequences of the latter alternative. Far from it; my article should have made it clear that I am bent on leaving the door open for the middle and professional classes to come over to the Labour movement. Only, I leave it to them to come over in their own good time, *i.e.*, when the disintegration of their own system has been brought home to them sufficiently forcefully. I should have thought that Professor Zimmern would have welcomed this sign of libertarian grace in me; for indeed it is, in these circumstances, the only true libertarianism. And I have left the door so wide open, that—need we be surprised?—Professor Zimmern himself should find it possible to enter by it. A. L. ROWSE.

1 Brunswick Square, W.C.

CIVILISATION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The Hon J. J. Stourton, M.P., is reported to have told the House of Commons Committee considering the Children Bill that "Capital Punishment is one of the safeguards of civilisation." Let us pity our unfortunate neighbours in the Netherlands and Scandinavia, though in their barbarism it may be some consolation for them to have the knowledge that murders have not increased since they dispensed with this bulwark of civilisation. E. ROY CALVERT,
National Council for the Abolition Secretary.
of the Death Penalty,
Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

THE DOUGLAS SCHEME

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Cole argues that "if the economic system were such as to generate continuously a deficient supply of purchasing power, production would . . . long ago have ceased to exist at all. It would be a question of explaining not the alternation of booms and slumps, but the complete breakdown of industry." The tendency which Major Douglas observes has no doubt been operative for a long time; it became important with the development of large-scale mechanised industry, and with the use of bank credit, and it continues and increases as these conditions continue and increase. But a variety of causes masked its existence during the pre-war period. The chief of these were the opportunities which then existed for the economic development of the great open spaces. These opportunities are now shrinking and are the subject of an increasingly strenuous competition between the industrial nations. It is impossible for all these countries to strive for what is so oddly called a "favourable" balance of trade consistently with the maintenance of peace. The complete breakdown of industry is perhaps a not very inaccurate description of the condition which we are approaching, unless the economic crisis is again averted by war.

Having proved to this satisfaction that there is no inevitable deficiency of purchasing power, Mr. Cole goes on to say that there is such a deficiency and that it is due (apart from the deflationary policy of the banks) to the reinvestment of savings. Mr. Cole and Mr. Hobson see clearly enough that the reinvestment of savings generates a deficiency of consuming power, but they will not allow that the repayment and cancellation of bank credits has any significance, so long as fresh credits are being created in their place, on a sufficient scale. What is the difference in effect between the reinvestment of savings and the cancellation and reissue of bank credit? The one process is voluntary, and the other is involuntary (so far as the individual consumer is concerned). But the effect of the two processes cannot be any different. Major Douglas and those who accept his thesis do not

contest Mr. Hobson's view regarding the effect of saving and reinvestment, but they say that voluntary savings only account for a fraction of the gap between prices and purchasing power.

It is more than a little misleading to suggest that Major Douglas' analysis overlooks the distinction between production and potential productivity. This distinction has been consistently emphasised in all Major Douglas' writings, and it lies at the root of his proposals. It is in order to enable the consumer to consume, and to provide an effective inducement to the producer to produce, the maximum production of which industry is technically capable that Major Douglas proposes to issue consumer credit precisely in the manner which Mr. Cole indicates.

Casa Nova, W. R. RICHARDSON.
The Mount,
Leatherhead.

SUGAR BEET

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Nothing has so far transpired as to the intention of the Government in respect of the application for increased assistance made by the home-grown beet industry. The situation thus naturally continues to give much concern to persons dependent on the old sugar refining industry and its associated and allied trades. There have appeared in your Correspondence columns recently interesting letters showing the extravagance of the sugar beet subsidy, and the wastefulness of encouraging the subsidised factories to produce white sugar to the detriment of the self-supporting refineries. I trust you will permit me as representing a town which, like London and Liverpool, is closely interested in the refining of both foreign and Dominion and Colonial grown sugar, to state a few facts on this important subject.

My chief object is to emphasise that, in the event of the Government acceding to the suggestion that the beet factories should receive assistance amounting to 16s. 4d. per cwt., this would have a disastrous effect on the old refineries—quite apart from the enormous loss to the Exchequer which would be involved. In the second subsidy period of the Act, when the assistance was only slightly over the above figure, the quantity of home-grown sugar produced was advancing at the rate of about 100,000 tons per annum, and during the last year it amounted to 420,000 tons. Had the subsidy continued at the same rate, the quantity would, no doubt, have continued to increase. If, therefore, it is restored to a similar level it can be expected to advance again. But that is by no means all. The tonnage of imported raw sugar being worked by the "home-grown" factories is also increasing to a serious extent, and amounted last year to about 240,000 tons. Now, the total consumption of the country is only about 2,000,000 tons, so that, adding the output of subsidised beet to that from imported raw, it will be easily seen what a disastrous percentage of the total consumption would be monopolised by the home-grown factories. Even as it is, the output from Greenock refineries is being restricted owing to this competition. The working of imported sugar in subsidised factories, in many cases built with money guaranteed by the Government, is, as a matter of fact, becoming as great a menace as the production of subsidised beet, and is an injustice which calls urgently for the attention of His Majesty's Government.

There are two staple industries in Greenock—shipbuilding and sugar refining. The shipbuilding industry here is almost at a complete standstill, and, therefore, any serious blow to the remaining industry of sugar refining would be a disaster of great magnitude to the town. Independently of the labour employed directly in sugar refining, there are many auxiliary trades which would be affected. These trades give employment to a large number of people—transport workers, dock labourers, coopers, box makers, tinsmiths, jute bag workers, engineers, coppersmiths, charcoal makers, etc. The annual consumption of coal in the Greenock refineries when fully employed amounts to about 150,000 tons, and it is estimated that an additional 30,000 tons are consumed in the allied trades, and for transport purposes. The Greenock Harbour Trust is almost entirely dependent on the sugar trade for the revenue necessary for the maintenance of its harbours, wharves, and other property.

In conclusion, I am pleased to be able to state that appreciating the parlous condition of the industry, Glasgow, Liverpool and Greenock Chambers of Commerce passed resolutions expressing concern at the effects which the suggested changes might have on the old-established sugar refining industry, and suggesting that the matter should receive the Government's most careful attention.

JOHN DRUMMOND, Jnr.,
Provost's Room, Provost of Greenock.
Municipal Buildings, Greenock

ALIEN-BAITING

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There is ample evidence that the "Buy British" campaign has entirely undermined any sense of civility or decency that may at one time have thriven in Customs officials in this country.

May I bring to your notice the treatment received by a German student who has been over in this country on exchange for some months? The week-end before last he was recalled to Germany to visit his mother, who was dangerously ill. After a few days he returned. At Dover he was subjected to what is, I believe, known as a body search. His wallet and private photographs were examined, and all his pockets searched. Throughout the episode the officials were consistently insulting. They told him he was one of those foreigners come to take employment from British unemployed. They ignored all his replies, and refused to believe, in the authenticity of the credentials which he produced, or in the references which he gave.

What are the legal powers of Customs officials? Are they entitled to neglect the ordinary courtesies of international behaviour by affronting a visitor whose credentials are easy to verify, and who has already been living in Great Britain without molestation for some months? Can anything be done about it, or has the British citizen to apologise to his foreign visitors, and admit that official conditions are still in England only at the stage of a crude barbarism? L. W. COHEN.

54b Belsize Park Gardens, N.W.3.

FOREIGN FILMS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have just seen the review of *Westfront*. I saw this magnificent film, the finest of the many war films I have seen, over eighteen months ago in Geneva. Now it appears that apart from a short run at the only cinema in London, and the only commercial cinema in Great Britain, as far as I know, which consistently shows good films, it will only be shown by private film societies. This is depriving the public of a great experience. One feels that we are deprived of many, which unless one is in touch with the Continent one never hears about.

Despite the fact that Manchester is overcrowded with cinemas I have only seen in nearly five months' residence one German film, and that a travel film, and no German, French or Russian films advertised as showing at a commercial cinema. (There is a Workers' Film Society which appears to have many of its proposed performances banned.) We are completely dominated by American and British films. What chance is there to develop a better or a really international cinema? I take it that other places are in a like position. It seems that unless there is a national organisation of film-goers to demand changes the position will never be altered. Individual protests are practically useless and a few critics in London cannot by themselves effect the change. FRANK STONHAM.

Manchester.

Miscellany

THE ORIGINAL FAUST

IT was a great thought of the Goethe Centenary Committee to invite the players of the Town Theatre of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) to perform Goethe's *Urfaust* in London and our two old Universities. The actual centenary of Goethe's death falls on the 22nd of this month, and the final scenes of *Faust*, his greatest work, were composed only a few weeks before the end. But the conception of the great drama, covering earth, hell, and heaven, had remained in his mind since early manhood, and various parts had been added from time to time, at intervals of ten years or more

than ten. It was the poet's unfortunate habit to begin upon some vast design, to compose fragments of it, and then to allow himself to be tempted away by some other of his multifarious interests which seemed to him more vital at the moment, or better suited to his passing mood. None of his longer works was written straight off from beginning to end, except only the *Sorrows of Young Werther*.

The possibilities of the sixteenth century legend of a Dr. Faustus, who sold himself to the Devil for knowledge and pleasure, began to sound and rumble in his head, as he tells us, soon after he was twenty, and he probably wrote down the earliest scenes as soon as his passionate heart was relieved by the completion of *Werther*, which made him famous throughout the world. These fragments made up the *Urfaust* (*Original Faust*), which he read to friends while still living in his father's house at Frankfurt, and read again to the little Court in Weimar, where a discerning woman copied out all the scenes, perhaps at his dictation. Her manuscript was discovered more than a hundred years later (in 1887), and that was the version enacted by the admirable company from Aachen, with the addition of two scenes composed in later life, though they are necessary for the drama and must have been latent in the poet's mind from the beginning. Those two scenes are the " pact " or bargain of Faust with Mephistopheles, and the death of Valentine, Gretchen's soldier brother.

All the rest was the result of Goethe's creative genius or " inspiration " at its highest and most spontaneous times —say, between his twenty-second and twenty-sixth years. Then, as he tells us in his *Autobiography*, this subconscious genius never failed him by night or day, and poems would arise in his mind without any effort of his own and would vanish away unless he wrote them down at once. It is evident that those Gretchen scenes, of such simple beauty and overwhelming pathos, were thus composed by a genius almost beyond the poet's control. One may say that the genius ran away with him, for he appears to have begun the drama rather as a humorous satire upon the University life he had known in Leipzig. The pedantic chatter of Wagner, that typical don, the dialogue between Mephisto and the student, and the drunken follies of Auerbach's Cellar are evidences of this.

But directly he approached the story of Gretchen, the workgirl's innocent beauty, her overwhelming love, her so-called fall, the drowning of her baby, and the piteous terror of her end in the prison, the earlier conceptions fell away, and he became inspired with a poetry of human sympathy and understanding hardly to be equalled in literature. One may notice that the prison scene was too much for Goethe himself. He omitted it in the *Fragment* published in 1790, he rewrote it in verse, " to make it more tolerable," as he said, and he inserted the " Voice from above " just before the end, saying, " She is delivered," whereas Mephisto had finally said, " She is judged." For the poet could not endure the hopeless and horrible tragedy of his earlier ending. And, besides, the *Second Part* lay already brooding in his mind.

In this *Urfaust* one misses the great additions of later years—the Prologue in Heaven, with the angels' song and the Lord's explanation of the Devil's existence; the second great soliloquy of Faust, his attempt at suicide, and the Easter hymn; the scene of Easter Day outside the town, with Faust's superb lines of longing in contrast to Wagner's easy content; the growth of the black poodle into Mephisto himself; the witch's kitchen, and the Walpurgisnacht. But, splendid in poetry as all those later scenes are, enough exists in the *Urfaust* to move an audience to the extreme of human emotion. In the two or three hours of the performance last Monday at the Cambridge Theatre in London one seemed to live through a lifetime, and at the end we were conscious of having witnessed one of the highest productions of man's soul.

As was to be expected, the German actors were recalled with repeated applause from the whole house, for the applause was well deserved. Hermann Schomberg, as a young and stalwart Faust, seemed to me too restless and impetuous in the first soliloquy. Senta Esser, as Marthe, contrived to convert a singularly pretty girl into the humorous scheming widow. Ingeborg Wachendorff was excellent Gretchen in her innocent passion, her recital of the ballad, and her soliloquy at the spinning-wheel, as, too, in the tragic, half-demented misery of the end. But the highest triumph rested with Kurt Arndt, whose Mephisto was a model of worldly cynicism, unbelief in goodness, and of " the spirit that denies." By the expression of his face, which looked like metal and yet continually changed, by the movement even of his fingers, and by his malicious smile, he was the embodiment of the spirit of evil, and all were relieved that he appeared in an ordinary citizen's dress, and not decked out in scarlet garb and plume.

HENRY W NEVINSON.

HAYDN'S *CREATION*

ON the 31st of this month, two hundred years ago, Joseph Haydn was born at a little house near the market-place at Rohrau, Austria—" To think that so great a man," exclaimed Beethoven on seeing a view of Haydn's birthplace sent him on his deathbed by Diabelli, " should have been born in a common peasant's cottage ! "

Although Haydn had a close association with England it has been left to the Royal Philharmonic Society to make the only musical celebration in London of Haydn's bicentenary. It would be a great pity if no further effort is made before the year is out to give the present generation of musicians and amateurs the opportunity to understand and enjoy more of the music of one of the greatest masters of the art—whom we are far from appreciating at his true worth. At the fine performance of *The Creation* by the Royal Choral Society's choir and the Royal Philharmonic Society's orchestra at the Albert Hall last Saturday afternoon, many of the younger generation present must have had a revelation, and it is much to be hoped that Dr. Malcolm Sargent, who conducted, will be able to persuade the Philharmonic, or some other society, to enable him to repeat this performance at the Queen's Hall. Unfortunately during the nineteenth century Haydn's *Creation* had become as hackneyed as Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and so far from understanding this remarkable work were our forefathers that it was hardly ever given intact, whole sections being cut because they were too bizarre for Victorian taste.

Another misfortune this great choral work suffered from was that of being mistaken for a " sacred " oratorio when it is merely a masterpiece for chorus and orchestra. The " religiosity " of the Victorians ruined Handel's *Messiah* and annihilated (partly by excision and partly by misinterpretation) Haydn's *Creation*. But the genius of Handel and the even finer and more highly developed genius of Haydn were such that one hundred years of maltreatment—during which these two works became so encrusted with barnacles as to rock all who heard them in the cradle of a deep sleep—could not destroy this music. Last Saturday afternoon, for the first time in my lifetime, I heard Haydn's great work divested from age-long incrustations and almost entire, as he wrote it; and it was one of the most thrilling and enjoyable experiences in my recollection.

It is well known that Haydn during his second long visit to England in 1795 had been given a libretto written by Lidley based on Milton's *Paradise Lost*. This was translated into German with alterations by Van Swieten. The English text is really remarkable, and its great merits have never been properly appreciated. A mere reading of the libretto will not reveal its excellent qualities apart from a possible recognition that the general plan is admirably designed for a choral work. It is not to be judged as poetry, for it is

not poetry; but this fact only supports what I have always contended, that real poetry is not suitable for musical setting. The poet, if he is a poet, has already done what the musician would be attempting to do, and that is why such attempts, as, for example, Mr. Holst's to set Keats' *Ode to the Nightingale* for choir and orchestra, are foredoomed to failure. To illustrate these points I will quote some of the text of *The Creation*. The following recitative is typical:

> In splendour bright is rising now the sun,
> And darts his rays; a joyful, happy spouse,
> A giant proud and glad,
> To run his measured course.
> With softer beams and milder light,
> Steps on the silver moon through silent night;
> The space immense of azure sky,
> In numerous hosts of radiant orbs adorns.
> The sons of God announce the fourth day,
> In song divine, proclaiming thus His power—

Now, when I say that these words are perfectly suited for setting to music, it will be more easily understood that poetry is not required for this purpose. What is required is clarity of statement, definite and varied content, and an absence of any strongly marked rhythm which would impose itself upon the music. What Haydn makes out of these words must be heard to be believed; but I may point out that he takes full advantage of the change of content in the fifth line and obtains here a most beautiful effect, pure and enchanting, and free from the faintest shadow of banality. One of the triumphs of the librettist is the following section:

> And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth; and God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful all and multiply.
> Ye winged tribes be multiplied,
> And sing in every tree; multiply
> Ye finny tribes, and fill each watery deep;
> Be fruitful, grow and multiply,
> And in your God and Lord rejoice.
> And the angels struck their immortal harps, and the wonders of the fifth day sung.

Here, again, the librettist supplies exactly what is needed. This passage is one of the finest things of its kind that has ever been written in music. It is here that Haydn far eclipses Handel, for his instrumentation in this section can only be described as marvellous. It is an amusing commentary on the musical taste of the nineteenth century that this remarkable section was generally omitted.

Another habitual omission is one of the most astonishing and original achievements in music. Once again Haydn owes a great deal to his librettist, and it is therefore a conspicuous example of the right sort of service a librettist can render to a composer. Personally, I consider it a fine example of poetic rhetoric in a rather baroque convention, and in order to perceive its great merit one must first of all accept this convention. Perhaps to acquire the taste to appreciate its real beauty fully will take a little longer; but most of us to-day are free enough from fashions and modes to be able to begin to see beauty when it is successfully achieved in a convention, although it is not one we are using at the moment. This section is another recitative given to Raphael:

> And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind; cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth, after his kind.
> Straight opening her fertile womb,
> The earth obey'd the word,
> And teem'd creatures numberless,
> In perfect forms, and fully grown.
> Cheerful roaring stands the tawny lion. With sudden leap
> The flexible tiger appears. The nimble stag
> Rears up his branching head. With flying mane,
> And fiery look, impatient neighs the noble steed
> And cattle, in herds, already seek their food
> On fields and meadows green.
> And o'er the ground as plants are spread
> The fleecy, meek, and bleating flocks.
> Unnumbered as the sands in swarms above
> The hosts of insects. In long dimension
> Creeps with sinuous trace the worm

Every time I read that passage I admire it more. It is one of those happy creations that sometimes fall to the lot of writers who are, on the whole, minor but have moments when they surpass themselves. But Haydn, who was not a minor but a major artist, is able to make the utmost of every opportunity that comes to him, and what he does with this passage is one of the wonders of music.

Luckily we had at the performance under Dr. Sargent at the Albert Hall an English baritone with musical imagination as well as a voice. Mr. Robert Easton, in fact, sang the part of Raphael so well that I begin to think that there is a future for English singers after all. The whole performance of *The Creation* under Dr. Sargent was a most creditable piece of work; so good, indeed, that I think Dr. Sargent for his own sake, and for the credit of English musicians, ought to seek an opportunity of repeating it at the Queen's Hall, when we should be able to enjoy more fully the many subtleties of Haydn's beautiful score. In the meantime, I would like to suggest the B.B.C. ought to make some celebration this year of the Haydn bicentenary; and that we should be in Dr. Boult's debt if he would give a performance of *The Seasons*, which has never been given in London within my memory. At the Albert Hall Sir W. H. Hadow made an appeal for funds to help the Austrian Government buy Haydn's house at Eisenstadt as a memorial; but to perform his works adequately would be the sort of memorial Haydn would have appreciated more, and now is the moment to rescue such a masterpiece as *The Seasons* from its present undeserved neglect.

W. J. TURNER.

ANALYSIS

YOU must not analyse love,
Nor play the peering alchemist.
I distilled my love in a crucible,
And it passed in a candle-white mist.

It eddied up in a candle-white mist,
Leaving naught on the bowl's agate side.
It was a wise man said long ago:
"Not we, but the gods decide."

I have set the empty bowl on a high shelf,
And the dust-motes dance in the sun's way.
I should have known that love was too single
For the mind to measure or weigh.

HUMBERT WOLFE.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Old Mixture

APART from one scene which in décor, costumes and lighting brings to life the most recherché of Christmas-cards, *The Cat and the Fiddle* at the Palace Theatre is very commonplace musical-comedy stuff. Miss Peggy Wood, alas! is disappointing. It is true that she has nothing very striking to sing, but her voice is certainly below her previous form in *Bitter-Sweet*. Then again, Francis Lederer, for all the charm of his personality, lacks that tenorial fruitiness which is surely an inseparable adjunct to the traditional young Roumanian composer of whom the heroine is enamoured. I found it difficult to become very concerned over the question whether the young man's exceedingly dull and derivative musical comedy should or should not be enriched by the addition of certain numbers composed by his beloved in tactful ignorance of their destiny. And this, with the minor complication of a theatrical director who cherishes improper ambitions with regard to the lady, is the mainspring of the action. As the director, Mr. Austen Trevor provides a

refreshing note of cynicism. Alice Delysia, interesting and elegant as ever, wanders in and out the piece looking for the few straws with which she is accustomed to perform architectural miracles and, alas! not finding them. I cannot resist a tribute to the sparking vitality (however conventional) of Miss Gina Malo's dancing.

Punch

There are three reasons why no one who cares for the art of the theatre should miss seeing *Punchinello*, Mr. Hastings Turner's play at The Globe Theatre: they are Mr. Laurence Irving's scenery and costumes; Miss Laura Cowie's performance as A Dark Lady; and Mr. George Curzon's performance as Philip of Spain. The play itself has fine theatrical moments; but Mr. Turner's style lacks distinction, and the quality of his prose can best be judged by the fact that it drives some of the actors into a hearty, half-amateur, arch, Shakespearean gabble. From this criticism many must be excepted. Mr. Alan Jeayes' Marquess of Partuga was a pleasantly mannered invention, of whose smoothness he was at times a shade too conscious. Mr. Nicholson, as an Old Actor, was ingenious at suggesting a theatrical personality; Miss Joyce Bland, as Judy, almost brought to life a part in which the author gave her no assistance; but she must learn to act more with her face. Mr. George Hayes, as Punchinello, struggles manfully with a character for which his voice, his features, and his general appearance are unsuited. Frown and storm as he will, he remains obstinately an amiable creature—a man doomed to be henpecked, not to kill his wife and child. He was best when he collapsed after his trial for murder—but even then he was acting at acting. Remain the consummate skill, the nervous craftsmanship, the studied yet easy art of Miss Cowie and Mr. Curzon. When either was on the stage, Mr. Turner's play was lifted into a higher category. Philip, tormented, suspicious, bored, irritable, pathetic, sits in his chair, tapping with his fingers, biting them, tossing his head, yet all the time locked in a nervous rigidity—Mr. Curzon gave us not only the King, the man, but the whole court, the tragedy of that family, the weakness that breeds cruelty, the distrust that is a worm of madness in the brain. His impetuous, angry entrance after Punchinello and his company have "fluffed" their performance before the Court was masterly, and so was his gradual return to self-satisfaction under the adroit handling of The Dark Lady, his mistress. In this part Miss Laura Cowie was a fit partner for Mr. Curzon. The play became their play, and we cared not a jot for Punchinello. There was a delicate unrefinement, an elegant naturalness in Miss Cowie's contemptuous wheedling that made me wish Mr. Turner would write a play round Nell Gwynn for her. Her passionate composure in the trial scene, the dignity of her recognition that she was no match for the inquisitors at cross-questions, were as effective as the womanly anger when Punchinello betrays his meanness in his treatment of Judy.

The Marlowe Hamlet

While the production of *Hamlet* by the Marlowe Society was excellent, the acting was not so satisfactory. Hamlet had the face of a flamboyant cherub and blew his trumpet too forcefully. Ophelia, in a badly chosen gown, was discomfortingly awkward. Surely an actor more feminine in features and stature could have been found. The Queen was better played as a self-indulgent character, although we were not made aware of the attractiveness of a woman who could inspire compassion in a wronged husband, and such loathing in a son as could only be born of reverence. Nor was the introspective sensitiveness of the young Hamlet made clear. We were given a highly strung boy, sincere perhaps, but unable to prevent himself from enjoying the tremors of his own passions. The part of Claudius was played with a dignity befitting Shakespeare's words, as a practical man scarcely aware of his newborn sensitiveness to right and wrong. Polonius acted well—an old courtier immersed in himself, who had outlived his wits but not his breeding; the only contented character in the play. An effort was made to give value to all the characters, not quite successfully. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were good, but a stricter producer would have made them less human and more artistic. The miming and costumes of the Players were delightful. In the production as a whole the dresses were not always harmoniously chosen, but the emphatic lines and decorative distinction of eighteenth-century costume are fitting to the acquired sensitiveness of character of the play. Apart from the joy of hearing words well and clearly spoken, so well spoken as almost to make us forget the shortcomings of the actors, the Marlowe Society succeeded in conveying the idea of *Hamlet* by the beauty of analysis as has Bradley by the science of analysis.

The Derby, Hammersmith

Mr. A. P. Herbert is the wittiest enemy of kill-joys and the best bard of the poor. *Derby Day* often shows his wit and his sentiment at their best, but unfortunately the wit is often inaudible at The Lyric, Hammersmith, and the production overstresses his sentiment. It loses its crispness. Of the quality of the music I am not competent to judge, but one point cannot escape any pair of ears—there are no new memorable tunes and the music does not help the words to tell in the manner in which Sullivan's music helped the words of Gilbert. There is plenty of simple fun and plenty of subtle fun in *Derby Day*, but the effect of it is somewhat confused by its being at times a parody of itself. This ironical attitude towards conventions which at other moments are used perfectly seriously confuses the general impression. The performance suggests that composer, librettist and producer have tried to kill two birds with one stone; the sophisticated and the simple spectator. Now the only way to hit them both is to give either the one or the other something so superlatively good of its kind, that the other is prepared to waive for the time his own preferences and expectations. But in *Derby Day* each is placated and coaxed in turn. This does not work; the simple are sometimes puzzled and the sophisticated are sometimes bored.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, March 11th—
- Teachers' Demonstration, Central Hall, 7.

Saturday, March 12th—
- Robert Mayer Concert, Haydn, Central Hall, 11.

Sunday, March 13th—
- Mr. John A. Hobson, Conway Hall, 11.
- St. Matthew's Passion, Bach Choir, Queen's Hall, 11 and 2.30.
- T. S. Eliot, "The Modern Dilemma," B.B.C., 5.
- "The Flight of the Arrow," Duchess Theatre.
- "Security," Savoy Theatre.

Monday, March 14th—
- Mr. W. von Dewall (*Frankfurter Zeitung*) on "After the Presidential Election," Livingstone Hall, 8 p.m.
- London Symphony Orchestra with Weingartner, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Tuesday, March 15th—
- Com. Stephen King-Hall on "British Internationalism and French Nationalism," Friends House, 1.20.
- In Aid of the Margaret MacDonald Baby Clinic, Lecture by Seton Gordon, at 10, Downing Street, 5.30.
- Schnabel, London Museum Concert, 7.30.
- Dr. E. H. Miles, "Industrial Questions in Soviet Russia," Royal Society of Arts, 18, John Street, W.C.2.
- Prof. R. G. Tawney on "China and Manchuria," London School of Economics, 8.

Wednesday, March 16th—
- Mr. Gerald Heard on "Rural Methods of the Future," 11, Chandos Street, 5.30.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THAT Coleridge was often tiresomely voluble is beyond question; but I fancy that his friends were frequently peeved at him, not because of his loquacity, but because he was so terribly and felicitously right. The kind of critical justice which Coleridge usually reached is more maddening to most men, with their careless thought and ill-fitting language, than any degree of verbosity. Mr. Frank Morley, in his *Lamb before Elia* (Cape, 10s. 6d.), quotes Coleridge's consummate note on Lamb's character:

> Charles Lamb has more totality and individuality of character than any other man I know, or have ever known in all my life. In most men we distinguish between the different powers of their intellect as one being predominant over the other. The genius of Wordsworth is greater than his talent, though considerable. The talent of Southey is greater than his genius, though respectable; and so on. But in Charles Lamb it is altogether one; his genius is talent, and his talent is genius, and his heart is an whole and one as his head.

Coleridge, a friend and passionate admirer of Lamb, saw him, that is, as that rarest of human beings, a man of single eye, a man at one with himself, a character undeflected and undistracted by tricks of temperament or the disillusionments of mood. Carlyle, snubbed and, one is sure, treated by Lamb with a disabling lack of seriousness, only sees the temperament he dislikes, fails ludicrously to have any vision at all of Charles Lamb; and yet he too sees him as a single-minded creature. Mr. Morley quotes the splenetic abuse from the diary; but in the Reminiscences—just reissued in Dent's Everyman's Library—there is a more deliberate, if equally foolish and unbalanced note on Lamb:

> Insuperable proclivity to *gin*, in poor old Lamb. His talk contemptibly small, indicating wondrous ignorance and shallowness, even when it was serious and good-mannered, which it seldom was; usually *ill*-mannered (to a degree), screwed into frosty artificialities, ghastly make-believe of wit; in fact more like "diluted insanity" (as I defined it) than anything of real jocosity, "humour," or geniality. A most slender fibre of actual worth there was in that poor Charles, abundantly recognisable to me as to others, in his better times and moods; but he was Cockney to the marrow, and Cockneydom, shouting, "Glorious, marvellous, unparalleled in Nature!" all his days, had quite bewildered his poor head, and churned nearly all the sense out of the poor man.

* * *

There is something very edifying in the spectacle of Carlyle rebuking Elia for "frosty artificialities"; and one can detect in this and the rest of the picture, especially a rather charming reference to Mrs. Carlyle's "native wit," that Sartor and his spouse had both been found rather slow by the swift-witted, if stuttering, Cockney—hence the dudgeon, and the implied brag of Craigenputtock's superior culture. It has been enough for most of us that Wordsworth and Haydon, neither of whom was precisely frivolous-minded, disagree so definitely from Carlyle's view of Lamb; and there are others who would care nothing if all the great men of the time called Lamb a drunken buffoon and a nitwit. He is a touchstone of a man's claim to be a judge of character—as Goldsmith is, or Blake, or Poe, or Emily Brontë, or Keats. One can admit that Lamb had faults, but only if one insists that, of his friends and acquaintances, those only were entitled to blame him who never dreamed of doing so. It was Lamb who, reminded that he did not know a man whom he declared that he hated, stammered that of course he did not know him; he could not hate him if he did. He is evidence of that statement. Anyone who disliked Lamb proved that he did not know him, or else he was evil and could not bear unselfishness, and the merriment that stands, laughing, with its back against the door keeping fast shut that which, if opened, would admit horror and the madness of despair.

Mr. Morley's book is modestly and persuasively written; but in so far as I understand his thesis it seems to me either mistaken or so obvious that it scarcely needed a volume for its ratification. "Elia," he contends, "is Lamb's 'pretence-character.'" Lamb, whose life was largely spent in the care of his sister, can hardly have not hated her. When he discusses Elizabethan tragedy, he writes of "overflowing griefs and talking distractions," and says of Webster's dreadful duchess, "if she talks, it is little more than soliloquy imitating conversation in a kind of bravery"; because Mr. Morley claims this language is "native to Lamb" . . . "there is no better description of Elia than afforded by these words of Lamb." Mr. Morley insists, too—and here I cannot at all follow his argument—that Lamb "became isolated, for a man of genius unusually so," that he secured an exceptional "withdrawal from the world around him," and that this isolation is another sign of his need for some disguise. Of course, in a sense, all of us have a "pretence-character"; it is a condition of social intercourse. Also, the man of genius, whether he express in his work his anti-self, as Mr. Yeats has argued, or the same self that controls his daily actions, is in peculiar need of that protection. Again, a man whose private life, whose most intimate affections are clouded by a perpetual threat may easily go further than do the happy, the careless, or the light-hearted in the making for himself a disguise to don, especially in a London visited by stamp-collectors and solemn-faced Scot metaphysicians. But in so far as Lamb did this, he was not exceptional. He would have been odd had he not so provided himself with a decent refuge. Nor is there anything unusual in his turning that pretence to artistic uses. What else could he do? It is perhaps possible, though rather unprofitable, to argue that had Lamb not feared the mad strain in himself and the recurrent madness in his sister then he might have become not an essayist, but a great dramatic poet; that it was the price of his sanity, and his usefulness to Mary that his work should have been on another level than that of his favourite dramatists. Yet I feel Mr. Morley must mean more than this; for this is only to say, what was too obvious to need saying, that the character of Lamb's work is conditioned by his life.

* * *

That I may not be unfair to Mr. Morley, I will quote a longer passage:

> "London itself a pantomime and a masquerade," he said. . . "I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fullness of joy at so much life." They were not real tears, nor was it real life which Lamb was contemplating at that moment. It is not unusual to see a young man living in a pretence-world; but with pretences there is a distinction to be made similar to that made earlier between humour and the high-jinks of school-days. In the above letter to Wordsworth, Lamb seems to me disturbed by the consciousness of pretending, it is an uneasy overstatement. But when Lamb became fully conscious that he was pretending, he did not throw it over, as some try to do . . . throughout the Elia essays London is described as "supplies for ever-gaping curiosity." . . . "And what else but an accumulation of sights—endless sights—is a great city; or for what else is it desirable?" This is the full development of conscious pretence—it is writing only for escape.

I do not know how Mr. Morley decides against the reality of Lamb's tears, or Lamb's life; or why he should accuse him of any escape different from that which is the happiness and the bondage of all artists. Perhaps if a man's daily life has so cruel and onerous an actuality as had Lamb's, he will be tempted to live imaginatively with fantasy—but why not? It is vulgar to think that Flaubert did not escape into the chronicle of Madame Bovary as truly as Dumas into the chronicles of Chicot; in all literature there is hardly anything so fantastic as the naturalistic novels of Zola. Lamb lived as he believed it to be his duty to live; he wrote, as all artists do, as he would have loved to live—what was his alternative? In one passage Mr. Morley suggests it might be to make "a bid for a life of his own." Surely that would have been an empty kind of nutshell on which to base a claim for immortality.

RICHARD SUNNE

NEW NOVELS

Awake. By SUSAN PRIOR. Pharos Editions. 5s.

The Memorial. By C. ISHERWOOD. Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.

That Was Yesterday. By STORM JAMESON. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

Popularity's Wife. By RACHEL FERGUSON. Benn. 7s. 6d.

The Marriage of Simon Harper. By NEIL BELL. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

Summer Storm. By JEFFERY MARSTON. Bles. 7s. 6d.

Job. By JOSEPH ROTH. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

The Woodcutter's House. By ROBERT NATHAN. Mathews and Marrot. 6s.

The heroine of *Awake* is "she." Her sister is Elizabeth, and the man she temporarily loves is John; others of the slightly indicated characters, too, are of sufficient unimportance to be given names; they do not share that intense anonymity which is to plumb the depths of a soul. And so, from her waking up one morning we are with her in acute analysis of her emotions until the following day. During that interval she has been for a Sunday afternoon walk with the young man she loves with a frenzy that obliges her to make a declaration to him; she has met with the discouragement of his physical indifference to her; and she has arrived the next morning at the complete subsidence in herself of the excitement she had mistaken for love. She has incidentally discovered herself to us as a young woman lately finished at a university who has cared for poetry and dabbled in psychology and admired Virginia Woolf; her reading, indeed, with the help of youth's ardent memory, provides her with quotations to fit her thought at every turn. Unexplained and undescribed, her home atmosphere is yet admirably indicated with slight essential touches—just those broken-off bits of her home which cannot help accidentally being included in the searchlight that concentratedly follows her as she moves. Apart from her, all is so still, one would not think there was a parent in the place. In the course of her devoted self-examination there are to be found agreeably recognisable truths: *i.e.*, she accounts for John's physical indifference to her by realising that she herself has kept sex-consciousness out of their relationship, and that he has only done what she seemed to expect of him.

> She snorted at this past foolishness and, delighted with the explanation, sought other examples to confirm the conclusion. There was her brother-in-law. He expected her to go on being sixteen—when they had first met—expected her to be as stationary as his mind; expected her to go on being an immature fool. And when she was with him she was a fool, never failingly, inevitably. Why, on the last visit—she was helping him put the goslings to bed—he had passed them to her two at a time, and she had dropped a handful, carelessness she would have scorned under ordinary circumstances. But he had expected it of her, and she had complied to the expectation. One had to act the superimposed rôle whatever it might be. (God! how it rankled!)

While Miss Susan Prior is engaged with her one anonymous victim stretched out on the rack of youth, Mr. Isherwood makes an even more remorseless exhibition of a whole group of helpless humanity; and he, also, seeks to heighten his effect by a method of allusion rather than statement. He must have disliked the practical necessity of giving his characters names; he atones for it by being as inconsequent as possible about their circumstances and relationships, and above all by ignoring any time-sequence for the situations and conversations—rather than events—of which the book is composed. For after you have decided that from its interesting opening the book works backwards in as orderly a manner as Chinese writing, with to-day coming before yesterday, and a logical progress into the past, you are obliged to realise that for Mr. Isherwood time really *is* an illusion, for sometimes, after all, to-morrow does come after to-day. And for his purpose he is justified. His final purpose is to build up a set of human beings modelled so unerringly that they come almost closer to you than yourself. An odd party or a stray motor-drive, a glimpse here and there—these are used like a chisel to wander about the group; and time-sequence has got nothing to do with it, any more than a man's head is made before his feet or his hands. In a story chronology would count; but Mr. Isherwood's vivid portraiture, which makes itself as greedily followed as any sensational story, he can, of course, tackle at what point he will. It is an amazing talent that keeps these people still at only a few odd moments of their lives—quick, sudden sittings with nothing prepared—and throws them deftly, scornfully, cruelly into a duplicate existence. The cruelty and scorn are not deliberate. Mr. Isherwood indeed appreciates his characters: Lily shattered by the loss of her husband and mildly tender to her affectionate son who yet has to argue with her ("a horrible facility grew upon them, so that they acquiesced in it"); Mary so bright, so Bohemian, so good at doing an impersonation of Queen Victoria; Maurice so insolently dare-devil an undergraduate; Edward so undismayed by the *impasse* of his abnormality; their wit, their sharpness, their obscenities are touched in with enjoyment. The effect is only cruel because when all is totalled up there has been little to observe that is not wit and sharpness and obscenity. Only the talent is exquisite.

This school of fiction might inveigle you into thinking it supreme for the sharpness of its effects. The scheme of omission of explanation creates so alert a reader, pouncing on whatever he can find to enlighten him, that the phrases are more than phrases, they have the excitement of clues. So it becomes almost astonishing, in proceeding to Miss Storm Jameson's novel, to be forced to the conclusion that one may also know a great deal even when one is told a great deal. The vivid clues which produce the vivid guess-work are exchanged for a careful comprehensive exposition that produces the merely attentive reader. So clarifying in a way has been the absence of information in *The Memorial* that it seems impossible that all this explanation will not obscure the sharpness of the essentials; but Miss Storm Jameson is too good a writer to lose anything by her thoroughness. She has written a long, full book in which every touch is a true one, each detail itself a little atom of the essential. For her ability to create individualistic characters who yet have the very accent of their time, Miss Storm Jameson stands very high among the chronicle-novelists. The drama is a domestic one, though occurring partly in war time. It is the description of the course of a marriage between a very young man and woman who have an insufficient income, an "unwanted" child, and enough love for spasmodic care and tenderness and enough exasperation for actual blows. A fine, convincing quality of youth and integrity in the young woman makes her relations with her shifty husband an absorbing issue.

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Miss Rachel Ferguson, too, has the direct method, telling everything, for her tale of a misalliance between a squire's daughter and one of the troupe of entertainers who assist at her coming-of-age celebrations. This writer is not afraid of being dull with affirmations, and has no need to be. The elopement, the lodging-house life and the landladies, the fatal attractiveness to women of the husband as a pierrot at the seaside, the growing family, and the icy aloofness of the wife from her philandering husband and independent daughters are Miss Ferguson's opportunity for the serious, sensitive sense of relationships which she combines with her richly comic talent. She allows herself more licence than Miss Storm Jameson; there is naturally more device and play in her work, for she is making an entertaining display of herself rather than of her times. Domesticity is here, too, conscientiously reflected, but Sally Porter (*alias* Potière in a genteel moment on the telephone; or even "the late Lady George," since she had once been nearly engaged by mistake to the baronet) —Sally Porter could not be true, but only because she is too good to be true.

The Marriage of Simon Harper goes farther in exhaustiveness, and borders on that kind of prolific telling that is probably responsible for the reactionary secretiveness of the first two books. It is almost inconceivable that any thought he could have would be allowed by Mr. Bell to escape the net of his words. How, indeed, if your publisher is to be able to mention the quarter of a million or so of words that you have thrown off, with another quarter of a million in the immediate past, can you afford to let anything escape? And life has so many major things to write about, like children born and dying, marriage, war, prostitution, and such an infinitude of minor ones, like washing-up, that words need never be empty. Mr. Bell found life placed at his disposal, and helped himself. The result is, again, a drama of family relationships, and he has chosen it in a sensational design, including the most unconvincing infidelity that could ever have hoped to be believed. But it is vital—more by means of liberally laying hold of vital things than by an art which can make vitality from anything. Mr. Marston is another writer to whom speech seems easier than silence. His intensely high-spirited story of a well-to-do family is concerned, on the public side, with the publishing world and the launching of a Socialist weekly, and on the domestic side with a great deal of good food and good drink and servants and a little danger, successfully averted, to private morals.

However acceptable, in varying degrees, may be the orgy of the domestically familiar contained in several of these books, the rush to a distant land, to the unexpected and unfamiliar scene, with the reading of *Job*, brings that further satisfaction, the recognition of the unknown. A Jewish peasant family in Russia and later emigrating to America, is described by this eminent German writer with a simplicity that misses no oddity or surprise or beauty. From familiar domesticity, too, Mr. Robert Nathan has a little reaction on his own account. The characters in *The Woodcutter's House* include a simple girl, a simple youth, a horse, a dog and a "little green man," and any of these may impartially take up the conversation at any point of the simple narrative.

> "Aha," exclaimed Isaiah, "I saw your little friend Susan; she appeared to be enjoying herself, and in the best of health." His voice dropped to a graver note. "She was not alone, my friend."
>
> "Why should she be alone?" asked Musket easily; "I hardly expected she would be. She has many friends. So she was enjoying herself; that is a good thing. I should not like her to be unhappy on my account."
>
> "She was not even thinking of you," said Isaiah.
>
> Musket replied irrelevantly: "The thing I like about her is that she is intelligent. Do you remember how interested she was in my travels? Also the fact that I was an artist appealed to her."
>
> "Well," said Isaiah kindly, "it appeals to her no longer. You told her to forget you, and she has done so."
>
> "Ah," said Musket thoughtfully, "women: there's a strange thing for you. One never knows what to expect. They are like you, Isaiah, always looking in the distance. All a woman wants is to want something."

The protagonists of this particular discussion are the horse and the dog; the wood-cutting youth and the beggar-maid would naturally be unable to express themselves with so much facility. The pathos of the little love-story in the wood is acceptable fairy-tale pathos, just touched up with cynicism.

VIOLA MEYNELL.

THE PERENNIAL HORRY

The Life of Horace Walpole. By STEPHEN GWYNN. Thornton Butterworth. 15s.

There was room for one more book on Horace Walpole; there is still room for one more book on Horace Walpole; perhaps there will always be room for one more. Truly, Horry is a fellow of inexhaustible attraction! Yet it seems at first sight a little strange that there should be such rich reserves in a personality neither complex nor profound, in a life comparatively uneventful, in a mind demarcated by so strait a *mur-d'-enceinte*, and topped with "Gothick" pinnacles at that. The truth would appear to be that Walpole interests us because he was perpetually interested. Egotist though he may have been, he never lost the precious knack of getting right outside himself. Nor was it only his personal fads and his personal friendships that absorbed him, active and enduring though most of these were; he retained to the last an unwearying capacity for being amused, for seeing the comedy latent in men and manners, the quiet, pervasive ironies of time and fortune.

Added to this he had the kind of wit that never "dates," that does not compel the modern reader to transport himself to a different and not always very easily breatheable atmosphere; and he was master of a literary style as enchanting as any ever evolved by an Englishman.

His latest biographer, Mr. Stephen Gwynn, stoutly denies that Walpole was a cynic, and it is probable that his superficial cynicism was "only his f-fun." Beyond doubt, his affectations were in the main assumed to cloak a temperament sensitive to the point of morbidity. Even his youthful conceit was shot through with wincing self-depreciation, and every decade of his long life brought him a more irresistible sense of his own inadequacy. The world which saw in "Mr. W." the "dancing Senator," the epicure in scandal, the dabbler in fantastic hobbies, the drawling, simpering and shrugging fop, was very far from suspecting that his own estimate of himself was even lower than the world's, or guessing what excess of sensibility those simpers and shrugs dissembled. He probably spoke from his heart when he said to Madame du Deffand, "*Je suis bien petit à mes propres yeux.*"

There is some danger that concentration upon the more amiable aspects of Horry's character may lead us to idealise him a little, may make us forget that he was really rather selfish, rather spiteful, rather capricious at times. We know a great deal about him that his earlier critics could not know, and because it is easier for us to be just to him we are apt to swing too violently away from their imperfect judgments. Time, and the continued study of the letters, will redress the balance, and in the interim it can hardly be denied that the better acquainted we become with him the better we like him.

Since Austin Dobson made the lord of Strawberry the centre of a softly tinted and delicately pencilled study of his circle, Walpole has been considered in his political character, as a figure in Whig society, by Miss Alice Greenwood, and in his literary character by the present writer in the English Men of Letters Series; but no full-dress life of him has been attempted even now. Mr. Stephen Gwynn's agreeable and most sympathetic book is less a "life" than a running commentary on the letters, illustrated by long extracts and short, all admirably chosen. For the general reader who is not keenly interested either in Georgian politics or Georgian literature, and whom the vast mass of the letters disconcerts, there could hardly be a more engaging introduction to Walpole and his environment; but it is an introduction only.

Every biographer of this most loquacious gentleman must be allowed to choose freely those aspects of his life and character which he regards as most relevant to a fair estimate of both, nor should any be rebuked for any omissions he may think fit to make. Omissions must be numerous, if the biography is to be kept within comfortable limits. Yet I can find it in my heart to regret that Mr. Gwynn has not said more about Walpole's love of children. He has told us about the romps at Ragley with the young Lytteltons and about the sojourn at Arlington Street of Field-Marshal Conway's infant daughter; but there is so much more than that to tell. What, for example, could be more characteristic than this remark, *à propos* of the visit to Strawberry Hill of Walpole's half-sister, Lady Mary Churchill, and her delicate little girl, "You know how courteous a knight I am to distressed virgins of five years old, and that my castle gates are always open to them," or what more delightful, in

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their own way, than the verses he sent to Lady Anne Fitzpatrick "with a present of shells"!

The mention of Lady Mary Churchill suggests another and a very different Lady Mary. Mr. Gwynn omits—and this is an omission that might justly give us pause—the fact that Walpole had other reasons for disliking Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu besides her old quarrel with his father. It should never be forgotten that this Lady Mary was the admiring friend and champion of Maria Skerritt, Sir Robert's mistress, the supplanter of the mother whom Horry loved so well. Loyalty to Lady Walpole's memory did not, however, prevent her youngest son from being on the friendliest terms with Maria Skerritt's daughter, to whom he bore a personal resemblance which may be remembered as an off-set to his alleged physical affinities with the Herveys.

Mr. Gwynn regrets by inference his inability to "throw any clear light upon Horace Walpole's sexual history." It seems curious, therefore, that he should make no allusion to the early infatuation for Anne Seymour Conway, mentioned both by Whaley and West, and the supposed subject of Gray's surprise in a letter of February 23rd, 1738. And there is an entry in the Farington diary for November 28th, 1796, which appears to have escaped his attention.

It is pleasant to find that Mr. Gwynn realises, as Mr. Lytton Strachey failed to realise, the tremendous ordeal which a visit to Madame du Deffand involved for Horace Walpole; "indeed," he remarks, "the journey to Constantinople nowadays would be less formidable to a chronic invalid such as Walpole had become." Nevertheless, like Mr. Lytton Strachey, and like M. Paul Yvon, he is inclined to be hard on him for his lack of consistent response to the ardours of the poor old lady. In mere fairness to the object of her adoration it should be recalled that when she was dying he was genuinely perturbed, and deplored that there was no time to send her James's Powder, that Powder in which he himself nourished so touching a belief.

Though he explicitly disclaims any intention of dealing with Walpole as a man of letters (in the wider sense of the phrase), Mr. Gwynn, when commenting on *The Castle of Otranto*, combats the views of those critics who descry in *Onuphrio Muralto* the spiritual ancestor of the author of *Waverley*. A good case might, none the less, be made out for this pedigree. It is not the supernatural machinery of this rather ridiculous figment which makes the thing memorable and gives Walpole whatever claim he has to be acknowledged as the progenitor of the Romantic novelists; it is the fact that, first of all English writers, he elected not only to place his personages in a "Gothick" setting, but also to trick them out in what he fondly believed to be the habiliments of the Middle Ages. A generation that had seen *Cœur de Lion* wearing Roman armour in the pages of Rapin, and Macbeth wearing a bag-wig on the stage, was naturally intrigued by this attempt to depict Crusaders, monks and hermits "in their habit as they lived." Of course, the attempt failed; but the important matter is that it should have been made, and made by an Englishman in the middle years of the eighteenth century. With all due respect to Mademoiselle de Scudéry (she is "Mademoiselle," by the way, not "Madame"), it is to be doubted whether the greater Romantic novelists could trace their literary lineage back to her. The quest for their ancestral domain may be pushed too far, but it might land us at much less likely places than Strawberry Hill.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

THE ROAD TO PEACE

Disarmament and Security Since Locarno. By J. W. WHEELER-BENNETT. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Peace and Disarmament. By LÉON BLUM. Cape. 7s. 6d.

The Politics of Naval Disarmament. By GIOVANNI ENGELY. Williams and Norgate. 15s.

The United States and Disarmament. By B. H. WILLIAMS. McGraw, Hill. 15s.

World-Peace and Disarmament. By A. J. JACOBS. Hutchinson. 5s.

If the volume of literature upon the problem is any index to the importance of the theme, then disarmament ranks high among the issues of the day. These volumes are only a random sample of a much wider collection intended to influence public opinion. They vary from the careful and indispensable collection of facts which Mr. Wheeler-Bennett uses to deepen our gratitude to him to Mr. Jacobs' essay in the principles of world peace which he makes to appear so simple if only mankind would be reasonable. Individually, none of them has the importance of classic treatises like those of Señor de Madariaga or Mr. Noel Baker; collectively, they serve to show that informed public opinion feels deeply upon the subject, and is well in advance of government opinion.

Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's book is an impartial account of the movements officially attempted towards disarmament since 1925. No better book exists for the reader who wants to realise the technical complexities of the problem. Here is set out, soberly and impartially, each stage in the long evolution towards the present Conference. It serves to show the dangers of optimism. No drastic cutting of the Gordian knot seem likely to attract responsible statesmen; they prefer, like Nature, the method of minute variations. Nor do the experts seem likely to discover general principles of any size. Their work brings out with painful clarity the degree to which their effort is determined by unstated psychological assumptions, all of which go back to the inescapable issue of security. My own inference from Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's book would be the simple one that disarmament is a function of security, and that any conference which seeks to solve it as a separate issue is doomed to failure.

M. Blum's book has the importance which naturally attaches to any pronouncement from the leader of the largest party in the French Chamber. It is the work of a good European who realises that security, in the sense which M. Tardieu attaches to the term, is neither attainable nor desirable. What strength it has behind its plea for the policy of the Second International we shall not know until after the French elections. Were they to result in M. Blum becoming Prime Minister of France, it is clear that a great step forward could be taken at Geneva; much of the fear which underlies present conceptions of French policy would be allayed. But it is difficult to be certain that M. Blum is any more representative of French, than, say, Mr. Henderson of British, opinion. His is a noble protest against the chauvinism of the last twelve years. How much more it is than that, the French people must explain.

Dr. Engely, of Bologna, has written the Italian complement of Mr. Wheeler-Bennett's book, though confined to the naval side and going back to the Washington Conference. It is, on the whole, good and careful work, to some extent vitiated by patriotic bias, and with a tendency to accept the pronouncements of statesmen as representing their full intentions. Mr. Williams' book is a good example of the American academic treatise. He states the issues soberly, with a careful assessment of the arguments on either side, but without coming to any more definite conclusion than that disarmament will be useful if we can get it, and that American interests favour its attainment. Some of his chapters are particularly useful to English readers, especially those in which the American attitude to neutral rights and freedom of the seas is discussed. The weakness of Mr. Williams' book is that he has no clear view himself of what the facts he recounts imply, or, if he has, he does not reveal it. All his sympathies are in favour of disarmament, but it is not easy, from his discussion, to know what line he thinks the United States should take.

I do not think it can be said that Mr. Jacobs' re-examination of the problem takes us very far along the road. He thinks that neutrality is obsolete; but he doubts whether any State will take action against an aggressor if it is likely itself to be injured thereby. He therefore suggests that a pact shall be made in which States agree to summon a conference on the appeal of three signatories, and the essence of his conference, details apart, is that no State shall be bound by the decisions of the conference unless it wishes to be so bound. As it is worth while for the individual to accept the decisions of a municipal tribunal, so Mr. Jacobs thinks it will become worth while for States to accept the decisions of his international body. He forgets, I think, that the essence of the municipal position is the power of the Court to get its will obeyed. When that is the case in the international field we shall not have the spectacle of the Great Powers shrinking from the application of the Covenant. The spectacle we are witnessing to-day in the Sino-Japanese dispute very largely corresponds to Mr. Jacobs' vision. I do not believe that most people will regard it as very satisfactory.

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RUSSIAN FEARS

The Soviets and the Next War. By R. D. CHARQUES. Secker. 3s. 6d.

Mr. Charques has done a valuable service in this discussion of a danger which everyone has heard speak of but few trouble to think about. Anybody who has been to Russia, or read the Russian newspapers, or talked with a Communist knows how universal and how deep-rooted is the belief in a "capitalist war" against the Soviets. We may pooh-pooh it or remonstrate. But the belief remains unshaken, and Mr. Charques explains why, and he also explains how the defensive measures engendered by this war-psychosis affect Soviet policy.

The Communists, it must be admitted, have substantial practical grounds for their fears. The wars of intervention, the civil wars, and the attitude of the western Powers in the past ten years have seemed to point all one way. The enmity and the ambitions of Poland, the darling and the tool of France, Bessarabia shelved but not settled, the sinister activities of Japan, Hitlerism in Germany, the "imperialistic" interests of Great Britain in the East—any of these might set the spark to the gunpowder. And facts are heavily reinforced by theory. Does not the Marxian analysis show that war is the inevitable outcome of the crisis of capitalism? Economic nationalism must fight international socialism, and in a world armed to the teeth it will not be a paper-fight. We may question the soundness of the Communist reasoning, and we may deplore such a fatalistic attitude; but we cannot deny the dangers, either in the general or the particular. Nor is it of any use—indeed it is childish—to pretend that the Soviets themselves have aggressive designs. They believe, no doubt, in world revolution—or at least they do lip service to it. But war, whether in the west or in the east, would upset their domestic apple-cart—and the apples, be it remembered, are of untold value. They will not fight unless they are forced to it. It may be, as Mr. Charques suggests, that their obsession and their inflammatory propaganda at home and abroad actually enhance the present danger, and even create a risk of "the intense nationalist ardour of the masses of the Soviet Union spilling over in a critical hour."

But to-day there is certainly no will to war either in the masses or in their rulers. They want peace, and they want as a guarantee of it complete disarmament all round. That, of course, they will not get; it remains to be seen whether the Geneva Conference will result even in any reduction of armaments worth talking about. Mr. Charques is emphatic on the importance of disarmament. It is, he says, the sole remaining protection against war, and—writing before the opening of the Conference—he hopes to see Great Britain taking the lead in proposing a radical scheme of reduction. Alas! he has learned by now that Sir John Simon and his colleagues in the National Government are not cast for that role. But, in any case, will a reduction of armaments by, say, 25 per cent., desirable though it may be, go very far to allay either the fears of the Soviets or the general risk of war? "The problem of peace in Europe," Mr. Charques himself declares, "is essentially a problem of international economic agreement and co-operation." It is the reduction of debts and tariffs and the rest of our nationalistic mischiefs—moral and economic disarmament, in short—that is wanted. By all means let us scrap battleships and submarines and big guns and poison gas. But that alone will not remove causes of friction with Russia, nor ensure the friendly commercial and diplomatic relations that are so urgently needed. C. M. L.

SHORT STORIES

The Spanish Omnibus. Trans. by WARRE B. WELLS. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 8s. 6d.

The Black Boxer. By H. E. BATES. Pharos. 7s. 6d.

Several Occasions. By MARY BUTTS. Wishart. 6s.

Kiss on the Lips. By K. S. PRICHARD. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Storm. By PETER NEAGOE. Paris New Review. 4s.

Christmas Formula, by STELLA BENSON; **A Terrible Day,** by DAVID GARNETT; **Green Thoughts,** by J. COLLIER; **The Wild Swan,** by L. O'FLAHERTY. Furnival Books. Joiner and Steel. 10s. 6d. each.

Two Studies. By H. H. RICHARDSON. Ulysses Press. 21s.

The Tithe Barn. By T. F. POWYS. K. S. Bhat. 10s. 6d.

Most publishers will tell you that volumes of short stories are unpopular; and yet it is hard to meet intelligent people who, if they read fiction at all, are not as glad to find good short stories as good novels. To-day the well-written novel, whether hand or machine-made, is commoner than it was thirty years ago; while the first-rate short story is comparatively rarer. In all these volumes there are but few tales that could rank with the best fiction now being written; but the little there is that is of very high quality has a formal beauty very rarely found in the novel. It is the kind of beauty that Miss Stella Benson achieves in her novels, and has not quite reached in the three tales in this volume, two of which are written in that mood of sardonic farce which, in her novels, is used only to accentuate her sense of life's cruel aimlessness. Miss Richardson's stories of death are, in their grave acceptance, of a rare and permanent loveliness; and there is a queer force and naked craft in Mr. Neagoe's tales of Central Europe. His vivid, staccato prose is surprisingly masterly for a foreigner's; and the direct contact he has with simple people makes his work contrast happily with the tales of the cafés and the studios which are too often all we get from the Par-American writer. Miss Prichard's stories of Australia, especially in her treatment of the natives, are among the most remarkable work that has come from that continent. Her manner is as restrained as her subjects are often violent; all life seems reduced in intensity by the desolate spaces of the great plains, and all force goes into the continual fight with an ungrateful soil. Even the terrible story of Rosie, the "gin" who throws her baby away, is moving only as a dream-tale is moving. Of the other contributors to the Furnival books none is quite at his best. Mr. David Garnett cannot write badly; but his story has a kind of angry exacerbation that interferes with the cool, objective criticism of life which we enjoy in his best work. Mr. O'Flaherty's three stories are good but not excellent examples of his talent; and Mr. Collier's tale of the orchid that fed on its owner, his cousin and his cat seems to me a very unsuccessful exercise in the earlier manner of Mr. Garnett. I cannot leave these books without congratulating the publishers. These volumes, with their good paper, fine printing (by the Chiswick Press), and illustrations by good artists are models of what a limited edition should be. There are only five hundred copies, signed by the authors, for sale; and at the price they must be some of the cheapest books produced for the discriminating collector. Mr. Bhat has much to learn from them; his edition of two characteristic stories of Mr. T. F. Powys, poorly printed on indifferent paper, is worth scarcely a fifth of the price he asks.

It is hard to see why M. Barbusse was asked to introduce the anthology of Spanish stories, translated excellently by Mr. Warre B. Wells. Barbusse writes with distinction about the relation between politics and literature in Spain; but his essay will be of little use to those who seek for literary information or æsthetic criticism; and Mr. Gorkin's biographical notes on the authors, though useful, are quite uncritical. Of the authors represented in this volume the best known in England are Ibánez, Unamuno, Baroja, Azorin and Ayala (the present Spanish Ambassador at St. James's). There is a romantic simplicity still in Spanish fiction. The authors here represented are not afraid of clear colours, sharp contrast and quick outline. The directness of such a story as Cencha Espizá's *The Friar Minor* is as keen as the heat of the Spanish sun or the glare of the plains. This is a much more national book than would be a similar volume of English, German, French or even Italian stories; those who like Irish literature will find here the same realism, the same defiant other-worldliness mixed at times with an astonishing baseness. There is a deeply religious atmosphere in Spanish art, whether the makers be Christian or anti-Christian; and that accounts for the depth and richness of many of these stories. There is the same sense of the beyond, breaking very tenderly into shoots of surprising loveliness, in Mr. Bates' best work. In his new volume he includes some stories such as *The Hessian Prisoner* and *Charlotte Esmond* that have already appeared separately in limited editions. He still has a certain intellectual frailty; he is so sensitive that at times he will not venture beyond an insinuation, when statement would be more appropriate. This volume will add to Mr. Bates' reputation.

Will the publication of *Several Occasions* make a few people realise how incomparably Miss Butts has grown in stature since her story *Speed the Plough* was acclaimed as a masterpiece—is it ten years ago? She is a perplexing, at times an exasperating, author. One of her best essays in fiction—*Ashe of Rings*—has never been published in England; but *Armed with Madness*, its successor, came out, and fell, so far as I know, deplorably flat. People still ignore her work when they criticise modern

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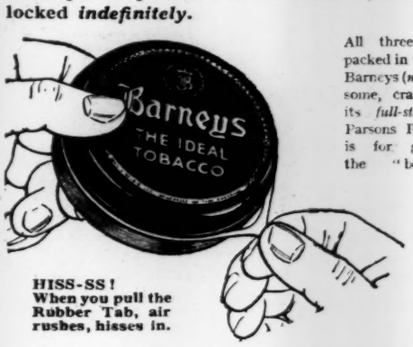

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novelists. That should be impossible now that *Several Occasions* is published. Some of the book is trivial, no doubt; but Miss Butts' triviality has a devastating quality, a dry triumph of accidie that make it seem terrible, rather than futile. *The Dinner-Party*, *In Bloomsbury*, and *Friendship's Garland* are stories which, if the generation to come shows any curiosity about our society, will take their place beside *The Waste-Land*, *The Poor Man* and *These Barren Leaves* as documents of revelation. There is one story at least which has an accomplishment, a clinching perfection that very few European authors could match. *The House-Party*, in its dreadful lucidity, exposes the soul of a damned, useless, perverted creature in a way that makes the reader see that there is something beyond damnation—just as Ibsen forced us to see that in *Hedda Gabler*. Miss Butts portrays, with a mordant economy, the insolence of a certain type of Englishman, especially when he is "abroad," as are the agonists of *The House-Party*; and she can give us an evil sketch like something of Toulouse-Lautrec's.

> For some days before, as well as for some nights, Vincent had observed a shadow about the quays. First because it had tried to sell him an obscene book, then because it tried to sell André an obscene book, then because it tried to sell everybody an obscene book. Then because it was obscene. Of no race or of any; grey, green, greasy, with a few horned teeth and black nails; its clothes a patchwork of hotel leavings, its speech a kind of American, pronounced with a lisp, the chi-chi of the East. Referred to as the Pimp. It knew a whore-house, a cinema. Lived by finding people who wanted these places. Found them. Of no age. Probably an immortal.

With an effortless effect of necessity Miss Butts works out the tragedy of Paul whom Vincent would rescue, whom the Pimp somehow strangely recognises and claims as his own. It is an amazing story, in which the terror, the disgust are somehow conquered by the pity which is never allowed to cloak our vision of them.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

SHORTER NOTICES

Easter Island. By R. J. CASEY. Mathews and Marrot. 18s.

Mr. Casey does better than his title promises; for not only is there a long account of Easter Island, and a discussion about its mysteries of language, cult and the great statues; but there are preliminary chapters on the never-wearying history of Pitcairn Island. This book is more popular than Mr. and Mrs. Routledge's well-known volume; and Mr. Casey's style is far better than the captions to the illustrations—these follow the worst traditions of Hollywood. Mr. Casey gives a pleasant account of the inhabitants of the islands he visited; and is evidently more at home with them than with the scholarly aspects of his problem, though these are quite adequately treated.

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One Lives to Tell the Tale. By EDMUND GILLIGAN. Cape. 15s.

The essentials of this story were related to Mr. Gilligan, an American journalist on *The New York Sun*, by one of the few survivors of some three hundred prisoners of war who broke from an internment camp on the outskirts of Cape Town and treked North. Most of them perished on the way; dying of wounds, sickness, hunger and thirst; but seventeen won through. The story is mainly concerned with the original narrator and his companion, who in two years marched across Africa from the Cape to Cairo, and there, swimming the canal, were captured by Arabs and conveyed to German headquarters somewhere in Sinai. It would have been a great adventure in peace time, in war time it sounds incredible. Yet it is hard to disbelieve a narrative so seemingly sincere, and so authentic in little details. It would have been better, however, for a few dates and footnotes; for the escape of three hundred men must have been an event of some importance.

Allan Ramsay: A Study of His Life and Works. By BURNS MARTIN. Oxford University Press. 11s. 6d.

Although Ramsay's pastoral comedy *The Gentle Shepherd* once enjoyed a great vogue, its author's fame rests mainly on his collections of Scots poetry, apart from which he is now read little enough. Mr. Martin's study is largely given to examination of disputed biographical details and the tracing of variant versions and performances of the play. As a critical estimate the book is perfunctory; Mr. Martin appears to be held back, first by a distaste for displaying any enthusiasm, and secondly by the fear of treading on the heels of former critics. Thus, while duly noting Ramsay's faults as poet and editor, he derives no joy from the humour and simplicity to be found in him. Nor does he go far with the exploration of Ramsay's place in literature. Rightly denying *The Gentle Shepherd's* influence on *The Beggar's Opera*, Mr. Martin ignores a converse possibility that Ramsay's play owes something to Gay's earlier pastoral *The Shepherd's Week*. The poet's influence on Burns is not even summarised, because a German critic has discussed it. Even his importance as reviver of the Scots vernacular is, as it were, left for granted.

About Motoring

A SECOND-HAND CAR

THE fortunate minority who face their bankers without fear or hatred in these days will be buying cars about Easter. These are days in which we ought to buy new cars if we can, since this alternative creates employment. But many folk are deferring purchase because they cannot afford a new car of the size which they desire, and because they are afraid of second-hand cars. This fear is largely fallacious. It dates back to an era when people of moderate means and more moderate knowledge used to buy horses and suffer untold tribulations with their purchases. A horse, they argue, is a far more simple entity than a motor car. Even to an untutored eye a horse must surely betray its major disqualifications. It will cough, or limp, or lash out, or lay back its ears menacingly, or survey you with a lacklustre eye which promises a rapid demise. But a motor car is a conglomeration of mysteries; and if you buy a used and unguaranteed car, you buy trouble. The engine will seize. The back axle will snap. The magneto will cease to mag., or whatever it is that a self-respecting magneto should do. No outlook displays so may fallacies as this. If you buy a used car in the right quarter it will carry with it a legal guarantee. I do not suggest that you should buy it from Jones next door; as you suspect, his word is by no means his bond, and, if it were, his bank overdraft is already so large that even his bond might prove worthless. But you can buy it from a dealer who will guarantee it for six months, because his experts have vetted it, and he knows it to be sound. Moreover, your innocence about guarantees is rather childlike. If you buy a new car from the factory you will certainly receive with it a large scroll, engrossed with much legal verbiage, and adorned with a serrated red paper washer. This formal guarantee has been carefully drawn up by a clever lawyer to evade responsibilities and to impress the innocent. It is not quite worthless, but I never yet heard that one of these documents procured a client any benefit which he could not have procured without it. Your real guarantee is your tongue. No manufacturer can sleep o' nights if he suspects that you daily inform anybody who will listen to you that he is a rogue, and that his wares are meretricious. Your eloquence will nullify the £1,500 which he has just spent in decorating the front page of the *Daily Wire* with a very different account of his car. Similarly, the dealer from whom I advise you to buy your second-hand car has invested the savings of his forefathers and his own profits of the past ten years in his business. He owns expensive showrooms; a large coachshop;

Can you answer these questions?

Who originated the phrase "Peace with Honour"?

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Who first reached the North Pole?

Where can the following Biblical quotation be found:—

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Where is the Valley of The Kings?

Who wrote "What Every Woman Knows"?

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Dr. GEORG GRODDECK (M.D. of Berlin), the eminent psychologist of Baden-Baden, who arrives in London on March 18th, will deliver the following Lectures in English.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18th, at 8 p.m. To the BRITISH SEXOLOGICAL SOCIETY, at the London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, Gower Street, W.C.1. Subject—"ORGANIC SYMBOLISM." For particulars apply to the Hon. Sec., British Sexological Society, 4. Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1.

MONDAY, MARCH 21st, at 8.30 p.m. To the INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY, at 51, Tavistock Square, W.C.1. Subject—"SYMBOLISM IN DISEASE." For particulars apply to the Sec., Institute of Medical Psychology, 51, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.

TUESDAY, MARCH 22nd, at 8 p.m. To the WORLD LEAGUE FOR SEXUAL REFORM, at the London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, Gower Street, W.C.1. Subject—"THE BIOLOGY OF WORDS." For particulars apply to Norman Haire, Esq., Ch.M., M.B., 127, Harley Street, W.1.

MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

London, W.1

(University of London)

THE WINTER SESSION will begin during the first week in OCTOBER, and new students should apply for admission at an early date.

The Medical School and Hospital occupy a central position within a few minutes' walk of Oxford Circus. They are fully equipped for teaching the entire Medical curriculum both for University Degrees and the Conjoint Course.

ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS'

Examinations in Arts and Science will be held in July.

The new West Wing of the Hospital is fully occupied; the rebuilding of the remainder is proceeding without the loss of a single bed; the remodelled Out-Patient Department continues to expand; the newly-built Residents' Block affords greatly improved facilities; the Nurses' Home is the finest in London. These, with other new buildings, including magnificent Laboratories, give to the Middlesex Hospital and its Medical School the most modern facilities obtainable in Great Britain.

THERE IS NO ACCOMMODATION FOR WOMEN STUDENTS.

THIRTY-ONE RESIDENT APPOINTMENTS are offered annually to students recently qualified. NINE REGISTRARS are also appointed annually. SCHOLARSHIPS AND PRIZES of value exceeding £1,000 are awarded each year. Large Athletic Grounds, Common Rooms, Squash Racquets Court, and a well equipped Restaurant are provided.

The Sports Club include Rugby and Association Football, Hockey, Cricket, Rowing, Fencing, etc.

For further particulars and Prospectus apply to the Dean, T. IZOD BENNETT, M.D., F.R.C.P., or to the School Secretary, Middlesex Hospital, Mortimer Street, London, W.1.

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THE STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

is even more profitable than before on account of the recent increase in the rate of income tax.

A 20 years' Endowment Assurance for £1000 with profits effected by a man aged 30 next birthday gives the following results:—

Sum Assured and Bonus at maturity if present rate of Bonus be continued ..	£1,515	0	0
Total net premiums payable (assuming income tax rebate at 2/6 in the £) ..	879	6	8
Profit	£635	13	4

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gross interest

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DUBLIN 59 DAWSON STREET

HEAD OFFICE - 3 GEORGE STREET EDINBURGH

a big repair works; and he spends hundreds of pounds weekly in advertising a fleet of used cars which have cost him a lot of money. The foundation of his business is his reputation and what he calls his "goodwill." Destroy those, and his assets are instantly converted into liabilities. So if you join the ranks of his customers, he will sweat blood to transform you into a friend; and you may deal with him confidently.

At the present moment his depots and all similar depots are choked with second-hand cars for which a very limited demand exists. Nothing will induce him—or any of his rivals—to buy another used car. He might do it for his mother or his *fiancée's* brother, but strangers who offer him used cars for cash will receive a welcome of the chilliest. He cannot even raise any genuine geniality towards strangers who walk in and express their desire to "buy" new cars; for he knows in his bones that by "buy" they mean that he is to accept yet another used car in part payment; and he has no standing room for any more. See how this glut benefits you. Jones, let us imagine, has a perfectly sound £450 car which he bought new last May, and which he desires to convert into cash in order that he may escape being sued for his income tax. Jones cannot dispose of that car at any of the choked depots; and in his desperation he will let you have it for £175, or some such absurd sum. So the dealer cannot reasonably ask you more than Jones is prepared to take for a similar vehicle. And since the dealer yearns for you to brag at the club and in your railway carriage and wherever carless humans congregate that he sold you a 1931 Tugmobile in perfect order at £300 under list price, he will take excellent care that your Tugmobile is sound in wind and limb.

Furthermore, supposing that your cynicism was justified, and your Tugmobile broke its back axle a fortnight after delivery, you are much better off than if you'd bought a new Tugmobile, and suffered a similar disaster. You would unearth that stamped guarantee and find you could get a new axle by sending the old one to the factory, paying carriage on both axles, and paying your repairer to fit the new axle after towing the car to his shop and removing the old axle. This would cost you quite a lot of money; and you'd have paid £450 for your new Tugmobile. You are only paying £175 for your used Tugmobile, and on balance you'd be nearly £300 in pocket, even if the dealer refused to give you a new axle, and fit it gratis, as he quite probably would do without serious pressure from you.

As soon as the slump began an acquaintance of mine terminated all the standing agencies for new cars which he had secured in severe warfare with other eager applicants, and at the risk of contracting to sell them in absurd quantities. He knew that comparatively few people would be able to afford expensive new cars for at least a year. He reorganised his staff and buildings to buy and sell used cars, overhauling each car before resale, and interpreting a six months' guarantee liberally. His energy and foresight have enabled him to make money when less alert traders are losing all they have made since the war. His example is being widely copied, and it is now possible to obtain marvellous value in used cars with an absolute minimum of risk. In sober fact, the purchase of a used car from a reputable dealer has been a tolerably safe and wise proposition for a long term of years; but never so much so as it is at the present moment.

The keynote of such transactions is that the first year's cash depreciation on any luxury bears no real relation to its value for use. The retailer's commission on jewellery amounts on an average to something like 50 per cent. because of the risks of burglary which demand insurance, and because of the high value of his stock, and his slow turnover, Hence he will seldom offer you £25 for plate which you bought from him for £50 a year ago. The retailer's commission on a new car does not even distantly approach 50 per cent., but it is large enough to pare pounds off the value of a car which has only been used once. Add to this factor the present glut of second-hand cars, and it is obvious that the customer can save a very large sum by buying second-hand; and the light nature of his risks has been sufficiently emphasised.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

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The safest, most profitable and patriotic investment to-day.
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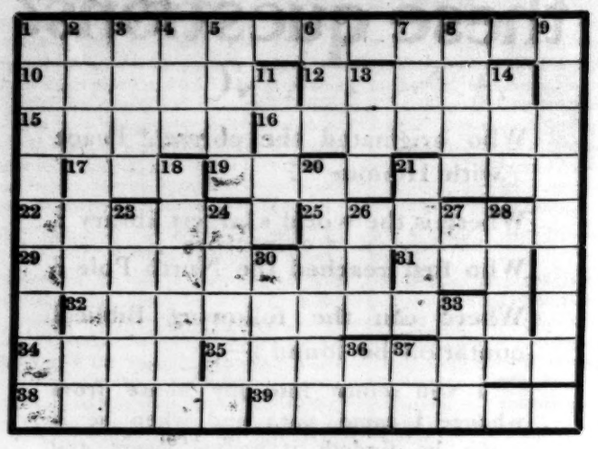
Playtime

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



ARNOLD MADE US IMMORTAL

ACROSS

10. Incrustation.
12. Something for which Nantes is famous.
15. Remain.
17. We are so mean we don't give schoolchildren prizes.
19. Not Oxford's reward for ice-hockey.
21. Diet not acceptable to a three-headed dog.
25. Sir Walter Raleigh was one.
29. I tell you why.
31. Just past.
32. Behaviour of Goneril.
34. I might be genealogical.
35. Touching this celestial belt . . .
38. I've lost the beginning of my nap.

DOWN

1. Wheaten product.
2. Just form a mental picture.
3. Foreign ex ex.
4. Hardly a bruiser's glove.
5 *rev.* Calpurnia's well.
6. This mangled one is new.
7. The summer "sails."
8. My phasm is sometimes faked.
11. Invariably "gallant."
13. Up-ended.
14. Put 7 *dn.* on my mast.
18. A little room of one's own.
20. Funk-hole shattered by H.E.
21. Once much prized at Berlin University.
23. You should dress up to these.
24. One of the Cooks.
26. O.T. idea of payment in kind.
27. Not noble with noble.
28. Much in evidence in Manchuria.
30. Assorted cries of derision.
33. 200 expressed palindromically.
36, 37. Cross-currents in the atmosphere.

(*For the five missing clues, see the caption to the puzzle.*)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. Philharmonic. 12. eon (one). 13. aether. 14. fro (ward). 15. resurrection. 16. —ist. 18. Toad *rev.* (*Toad of Toad Hall*). 19. ogle. 22. phanerogamic. 26. liner. 27. tra la la ("*The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring*"). 30. anti-national. 32. seedling. 34. Peel. 35. torrentially.

DOWN.—1. periplast. 2. hoe. 3. instanter. 4. Laud (dual). 5. Hera (hare). 6. atro-(bilious). 7. rhetor. 8. mec (on in). 9. ort. 10. iro (roi). 11. conically. 14. film. 17. shine. 19. Iago *rev.* 20. galop. 21. (v)ei(l). 23. (Ich) dien *rev.* 24. Erale. 25. rtain (train). 28. Lena *rev.* (lane). 29. leal *rev.* 31. T.N.T. 33. gi (be).

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

I have three packs of playing-cards with identical backs. Let me call them packs A, B and C.

I draw a card at random from pack A and shuffle it in with pack B.

I now turn up the top card of pack A and find it is the Queen of Hearts.

Next, I draw a card at random from pack B and shuffle it in with pack C. Then, turning up the top card of pack B, I find that that is the Queen of Hearts also.

I now draw a card at random from pack C and place it at the bottom of pack A.

What is the chance that the Ace of Spades is the top card of pack C?

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

Paul received presents from Ada, Dorothy, Evelyn, Frances and Grace.

Where did Mr. Smith sit? Correct solutions were received from G. L. Butler and M. Fleming.

Either this puzzle was more difficult than I had supposed, or the majority of my solvers are not Contract Bridge players. I wonder which?

I shall be glad to send, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, a copy of the solution of this puzzle, and of the four hands as bid and played.

CALIBAN.

REFUGE
ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED.

Chief Office: Oxford Street, Manchester.
(Incorporated in England 1864.)

Summary of Directors' Report for the year ended 31st December, 1931.

Total Income for year £11,502,809, being an increase of **£322,458** over the previous year.

Total Assets at end of the year, **£52,719,006,** being an increase of **£3,350,759** during the year.

Total Claims Paid in the year, **£4,923,215.** The Company has paid **£70,946,838** in claims since its establishment.

The Total Assurances existing on December 31st, 1931, amounted to **£68,955,923** in the Ordinary Branch and **£97,049,674** in the Industrial Branch.

The Premium Income in the Ordinary Branch was **£4,139,059,** being an increase of **£127,891** over the previous year; and in the Industrial Branch it was **£5,084,493,** being an increase of **£142,902.**

The Company transacts Life Assurance business of every description.

J. WILCOCK HOLGATE, *Chairman.*

BRITANNIC
ASSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.

(ESTD. 1866.)

Chief Offices: - - - - - - - BROAD STREET CORNER, BIRMINGHAM.

Summary of the Directors' Report for the Year 1931.

TOTAL INCOME—all Branches	£5,494,685.
PREMIUM INCOME—Ordinary Branch	£1,083,138.
Industrial ,, ...	£3,206,703.
General ,, ...	£131,357.

TOTAL FUNDS—£20,418,746. Full provision made for all depreciation as at 31st December, 1931.
TOTAL CLAIMS PAID during year in the Life Branches .. .. .. £1,826,070.
VALUATION—Standard maintained on same stringent bases as before in both the Life Branches.
BONUSES TO POLICYHOLDERS—
ORDINARY BRANCH—£1 12s. 0d. per cent. added to Sums Assured.
INDUSTRIAL BRANCH—Additions to Sums Assured under policies becoming claims prior to 1st April, 1933, varying from 5 per cent. after 10 years in force to 20 per cent. after 40 years in force (with certain exceptions).

All Classes of **Life, Fire, Accident, Motor, Employers' Liability** and **General** Insurances transacted.

J. MURRAY LAING, F.I.A., F.F.A.
Secretary and Actuary.

JNO. A. JEFFERSON, F.I.A.
Chairman and General Manager.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

THE GAMBLE IN THE £—THE ONLY WAY OUT—FUTURE OF COMMODITY PRICES—INVESTMENT REACTIONS—CABLES AND WIRELESS

THESE are days of great peril. We were pushed off the gold standard by panic withdrawals of foreign balances and now we are in danger of being pushed back again by a frenzied foreign gamble in sterling. And at the old parity, if the French have their way! The pound on March 3rd was quoted at $3.48\frac{3}{8}$. A week later it is $3.70—and still rising. The authorities have been trying desperately hard to stay the advance, but they have been as helpless as Mrs. Partington in face of the Atlantic. On Wednesday they abandoned the attempt—for the time. At 11.30 the "peg" was removed and the rate bounded from $3.54 to $3.71\frac{1}{2}$. The sensational Press fans the boom with such headlines as: "The nation continues its prosperity march. Rising stocks and shares. Tariff-protected markets." The psalm-singing City Editor of the *Daily Mail* grows more lyrical. Cheaper and cheaper money is everywhere acclaimed. Bank rate is talked down to 3 per cent. with 5 per cent. War Loan converted at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. New issues of the trustee class are fifty times over-subscribed. The Stock Exchange buzzes with intense activity as Paris buys and sells its favourite stocks. Over-valued industrial shares rise to even more fantastic heights. Madness is in the air, the pound is going through the roof! There is a grave risk that the authorities will be tempted to stabilise the pound quickly, if not at the old parity, then at some figure around $4.00. The world marketing advantages of our exporting industries are again in danger of being jettisoned for the honour (*sic*) of London as the world's financial centre. A trade revival for the "sterling" *bloc* of countries is on the point of being killed by the sterling prices of commodities falling before the gold prices can rise. Are we to allow foreign speculators to play tricks with the future of our trade?

* * *

There is only one certain way of bringing this dangerous gamble in the sterling exchange to an end. This is an announcement that the British Government does not intend to return to gold. It is not so dreadful as it sounds. We have been "off" the gold standard for six months and we may as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb. Actually we have benefited from the change and have helped at the same time nearly one half of the world. The Midland Bank does well to call attention in its *March Review* to the fact that never before has Great Britain had such opportunities for shaping the course of world trade. There is at the present time no world price for any commodity, for the world no longer operates upon a universal monetary basis. Since the middle of November last gold has been appreciating in terms of commodities (that is, gold commodity prices have been falling) while sterling has been fairly steady, despite the heavy decline in its gold value. Now on account of the great commodity markets in Liverpool and London, steady sterling prices exercise a stabilising influence upon gold prices. *Per contra*, falling gold prices for commodities act as a weight upon sterling quotations. The relative strength of the two forces depends partly upon the relative importance of gold and non-gold countries as producers and consumers of particular goods, partly upon the influence of London as a world trading and financial centre. The Midland Bank estimates that sterling can be put almost, if not quite, on a parity with gold in respect of relative power over commodity prices. At any rate, the gold standard countries, and those maintaining nominal parity with gold, account for approximately one-half the total of the world's international trade. It is therefore highly important that the sterling prices of commodities should not be pulled down by a sensational rise in the gold exchange value of sterling. What we really want is a rise in sterling prices to somewhere around the 1929 level, accompanied by a rise in the gold prices of commodities induced by controlled inflation in the gold-standard countries, as America, to her honour, is trying to bring about. If the British Government were to declare definitely for a managed paper currency for all time, if it were to express its intention of restoring the 1929 sterling price level and maintaining it by the usual monetary methods, the gamble in the sterling exchange would die an instantaneous death. A cheap money policy could then safely be followed, which would stimulate capital development at home and provide an increased demand for labour. Sterling prices would gradually rise and America would be given a real chance to make good with her "controlled inflation" scheme. As long as an active market in forward exchange were maintained, the fluctuations in the exchange values of the pound would not be to the detriment of international trade. The future of London as the world's financial centre would not be prejudiced. Sterling would become the world standard instead of gold. As Mr. Keynes remarked at the National Mutual meeting last week, the old gold standard worked well when it was in effect a sterling standard, but when gold went "off" sterling last autumn, the gold standard became doomed.

* * *

If the Government will not abandon gold, the next best policy is for it to declare that it does not contemplate an early stabilisation of the pound and that it hopes to expand credit at home and raise the price-level. This should damp the ardour of the foreign speculator, who is always nervous of inflation, but there is always the danger of a flight from the dollar into the pound on the ground that inflation in America would be more terrible than inflation in Great Britain. Whatever policy is followed, it is highly desirable that the Bank of England and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York should work in collaboration to prevent a "bull" drive on the pound or a "bear" drive on the dollar. The "peg" on the exchange must be put back. If the Treasury has now secured the balance of its foreign exchange credits, the Bank of England should begin to acquire a foreign exchange reserve on its own account.

* * *

If we are to have a cheap money "boom" the investor may employ his funds profitably in "stagging" all long-dated new issues of the gilt-edged type and in buying the long-dated prior charges of the leading domestic industries, which will benefit directly from cheap money or temporarily from tariff protection. The struggle between sterling and gold makes the future of world trade so uncertain that I would not add to any commitments in equity shares while the market psychology is bullish. As for the shares which Paris speculators have been buying, I would avoid them like the plague. Last week, I gave a warning about the quite unjustified rise in oil shares. Royal Dutch has now reacted sharply from $20\frac{3}{8}$ to $17\frac{3}{4}$ on the cessation of Paris buying. Gold shares have also slumped, and on Thursday morning dealing was a matter of negotiation. One cannot help feeling sorry for the "Kaffir" market. South African gold shares never reflected adequately the improved results for 1931 or the increase in sterling dividends which were paid last month as a result of the gold premium. The trouble is that the market has been fed too long on false hopes. There is no news so stale as the news which is announced for to-morrow but never comes. The market has been told so often that South Africa is going off the gold standard and that the Low Grade Ore Commission is about to propose wonderful concessions to the low-grade mines, that it has built up what is known as a stale bull account. Actually, the South African Government is so hard-up that it cannot provide the money for making concessions to low-grade mines, and as long as the present Government is in power it will not leave the gold standard until Great Britain returns to it or Holland goes off. Gold shares may therefore have a bad reaction, but as long as the world persists in maintaining a gold standard, they should not be sacrificed.

* * *

Murder will out, and the crime of over-capitalisation cannot be hidden indefinitely. Cables and Wireless, Ltd., has now passed the dividends on its £23 millions of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. preference stock. The following table shows the slump in the market valuation of this company's securities.

	Par Value.	High 1930.	Present Market Price.
$5\frac{1}{2}$% cum. pref. stock	£23,160,741	100 = £23,160,741	45 = £10,422,333
$7\frac{1}{2}$% "A" ordinary stock	20,686,850	77 = 15,928,878	15 = 3,103,028
"B" ordinary stock	8,656,000	$39\frac{1}{2}$ = 3,419,111	$9\frac{1}{2}$ = 822,318
	£52,503,591	£42,508,730	£14,347,679

It will be seen that the decline in market value as compared with the par values is no less than 72.67 per cent. I propose to deal with the fantastic over-capitalisation of this merger in next week's issue, but may I urge upon the directors that they should no longer keep the stockholders in ignorance of the 1931 results, especially in view of the bald statement that the company is not to take possession of its magnificent new offices on the Embankment. Is this self-repentance or coercion from bankers?

HALIFAX

THE WORLD'S LARGEST BUILDING SOCIETY.

LARGE INCREASE OF BUSINESS. **TOTAL ASSETS EXCEED £77,900,000.**

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS to be presented to the Shareholders at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, to be held at Halifax, on Monday, the 21st day of March, 1932.

The Directors have great pleasure in submitting to the Members the Annual Statement of Accounts, showing the operations of the Society during the financial year ended the 31st January, 1932.

It is very gratifying to the Directors to be able to report that, in a year of continued depression in trade and industry, and widespread unemployment, and through a period of the greatest anxiety in the National financial situation, there have been very substantial increases in all departments of the Society.

The following statement of the business at the end of last year, compared with the figures on the 1st February, 1928, being the date of the union of the Halifax Permanent and the Halifax Equitable Building Societies, indicates the enormous expansion and development of the business of the United Society during the last four years, viz. :—

	Number of Open Accounts.	Invested Funds.	Assets.	Reserve Funds
Feb. 1st, 1932..	476,804	£75,137,211	£77,950,353	£2,813,142
Feb. 1st, 1928..	329,224	£45,520,281	£46,961,482	£1,461,200
Increase in 4 years	147,380	£29,616,930	£30,988,871	£1,351,942

ASSETS. The Total Assets at the end of the year amounted to £77,950,353, an increase of £7,902,954.

RESERVE FUND. The Reserve Fund, after providing for all interest and bonus allotted up to the date of the account stands at £2,813,142.

INCOME. The Income for the Year, exclusive of investments realised, was £33,459,870.

MORTGAGES. During the year there was a very heavy demand for loans upon mortgage of property, and the total amount advanced was £17,069,850. This sum is £176,758 more than the record sum advanced in the preceding year, and the average amount of advances completed each month has again exceeded £1,400,000.

The number of new Borrowers was 30,383 compared with 29,543 in the previous year, and the average amount advanced on each Mortgage was £561. The total amount now owing upon Mortgages is £59,775,663, an increase during the year of £6,872,879, and the total number of Borrowers is 152,035, an increase of 16,650.

Of this total 77 per cent. are in respect of Mortgages where the debt does not exceed £500, and the average amount owing on all the Society's Mortgages is only £393 each. The Mortgage accounts are again in an entirely satisfactory condition, and there are no properties of Borrowers in the possession of the Society to be reported in the statutory Schedule.

SHARE AND DEPOSIT FUNDS. The amount standing to the credit of Investing Shareholders and Depositors is £75,137,211, an increase of £7,582,400.

PROFITS. The net profit of the year, after payment of all expenses and Income Tax, and after providing for all interest due to Depositors and Shareholders up to the date of the Account, is £428,641.

The Directors recommend that there shall be distributed, in addition to the interest of £3 10s. 0d. per cent., a bonus of £1 10s. 0d. per cent. upon the sum standing to the credit of Paid-up Shareholders, Class 1; and, in addition to the interest of £3 10s. 0d. per cent., a bonus of £2 10s. 0d. per cent. to the Subscription Investing Shareholders upon the total amount paid by them up to the end of the preceding year.

ACCOUNTS. The new accounts opened during the year numbered 91,014, and the total number of Shareholders' and Depositors' accounts open at the end of the year was 476,804, an increase of 37,976.

The Directors desire to congratulate the members upon the exceedingly satisfactory results of the business of the past year, and upon the very strong financial position of the Society, as revealed by the Statement of Accounts. In every respect the Society has maintained and strengthened its pre-eminent position as by far the largest Building Society in the World, a distinction it has now held for over 20 years.

ENOCH HILL,
President and Managing Director.

New Balance Sheet and Full Information Free on Application.

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Manager & Actuary.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH.	DIRTY WORK.	Wed. & Fri.
DUKE OF YORK'S.	The IRON WOMAN.	M., Th.
FORTUNE	FIRE.	Wed., Sat.
GAIETY.	HOLD MY HAND.	Wed., Sat.
GLOBE.	PUNCHINELLO.	Wed. & Sat.
HIPPODROME.	BOW BELLS.	Daily.
QUEEN'S	THE IMMORTAL HOUR.	W., S.
SAVOY.	PAULETTE.	Th., Sat.
STRAND.	IT'S A GIRL.	Thurs. & Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL.	Wed., Sat.
WYNDHAM'S.	THE GREEN PACK.	Wed., Sat.

OPERAS

QUEEN'S. (Ger. 9437.) NIGHTLY at 8.30.
Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30. (For 2 Weeks Only.)
THE IMMORTAL HOUR.
GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES,
W. Johnstone-Douglas, Arthur Cranmer, Bruce Flegg.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. Bar 6404.
Nightly, 8.30. Mats., Wed., Fri., 2.30.
RALPH LYNN in
DIRTY WORK.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar. 3161.
Sir Oswald Stoll presents
ERIK CHARELL'S
WHITE HORSE INN.
At 2.30 and 8.15. (April 23rd Last Night.)

DUKE OF YORK'S. Temple Bar 5122.
Evgs., 8.30. Mon. & Thurs., 2.30. (Reduced Prices.)
THE IRON WOMAN. By Frederick Jackson.
"Every Mother Should See This Play."

FORTUNE. EVGS., at 8.30 Tem. Bar. 7373.
FIRE.
By Enita Lascelles.
Mats., Wednesday and Saturday, 2.30.

GAIETY. Evgs., 8.15. Mats., W. & S., 2.30. Tem. 6991.
HOLD MY HAND,
with STANLEY LUPINO,
JESSIE MATTHEWS, SONNIE HALE.

GLOBE. 8.30. Wed. & Sat., 2.30. Ger. 8724.
PUNCHINELLO.
The Play of Punch and Judy.
By John Hastings Turner.

HIPPODROME. London. GER. 0648.
TWICE DAILY at 2.30 & 8.15.
A New Revue, *BOW BELLS.*
Binnie Hale, Nelson Keys,
Andre Randall, Harriet Hoctor, Robert Hale.

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PAULETTE.
A New Musical Play.
Prices, 2s. to 10s. 6d. ex. tax. (Pit and Ampi. unres.)

STRAND. (Smoking.) 8.30. Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
IT'S A GIRL.
LESLIE HENSON. SYDNEY HOWARD.
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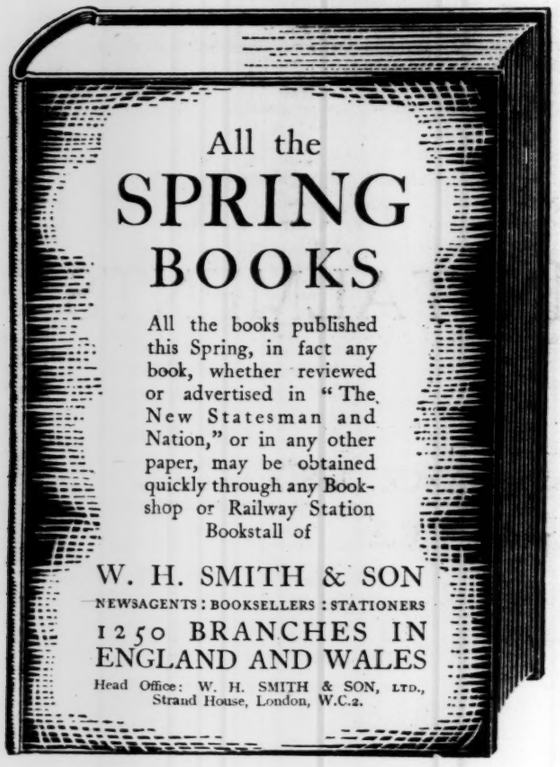
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A MEDITATION ON CAKES

WHAT is this? I say to myself, as, seated on an uncharged-for bench in the Luxembourg Gardens, I perceive faint smoke go up beside nearby trees. A tall, grey woman is beside where the smoke ascends; before her is a square, soot-black structure, and I can see that she has a ladle in her hand. Some priestess of a rite that has to be performed on a black altar in the open air, I permit myself to imagine. I look more intently on the scene. A string of people are before the altar-like structure, each with the peculiar intentness of those who are in expectation of some benefit: I watch the sybil hand each a honey-coloured cake. Thereupon I approach the soot-black structure myself. The sybil takes pieces of charcoal and puts them on a fire that is within the black square. Beside her is a great can of creamy paste. She takes up a ladleful: pulling out a pan she pours it in; she presses a cover down upon the paste, twists the pan upside down, and deftly pushes it within what is, after all, an oven set amongst trees. She draws it back in a minute; there, with diamond-like punches upon it, is an oblong cake. Shaking sugar on it she hands the cake to the first in line. It is a commercial transaction, I discover: there is an announcement "Gaufres, 80 centimes." and now I stand in line to receive one, with a soldier who wears a fez, a child who holds a toy-balloon, an old harridan, a very chic lady, and a man wearing velveteen trousers, a muffler and a cap, with an empty sack hanging across his shoulder, who nevertheless looks like an artist, and who (as I was to learn) supports a large family by collecting and marketing ants' eggs. I receive my gaufre. It is one of those cakes that are puffed into layers of paste; it is very tasty. I discover that it is rather like the American waffle, and am led to guess that "waffle" and "gaufre" are cognate words.

Back on my bench I can think of nothing else but cakes; my stream of consciousness flows around cakes. It is Shrove Tuesday, the eve of Lent. It has always been recognised that the most satisfactory way of preparing for a fast is to have a feast. The best part of a feast, it has always seemed to me, is the part in which cakes have a place; a feast in which no time is wasted getting to the cakes—in which the cakes constitute the feast—is the best of feasts. Pancake Night, Shrove Tuesday, as I discern now, is rightly placed before Ash Wednesday: the happiest feast before the longest fast.

It is true that the cakes eaten on this feast are cakes in their simplest form—to wit, pancakes. But pancakes made by a practised pancake-maker (and there are, the Lord be praised, many such!) make a dish fit for a better man than a king—a dish fit for a sage. When I think of sages eating pancakes, I think of them as eating pancakes made thin and with much butter on their surfaces. As a youth I used to tramp from house to house in a certain district in Ireland on Shrove Tuesday evening. I had forty aunts (well, not quite forty), all adepts in pancake-making, and all living conveniently near to each other. I managed to visit nearly every one of them on Pancake Night.

The best story I ever read has the making of pancakes for its central incident. You will find it in *The Thousand and One Nights;* not in any of the abbreviated versions; it is somewhere in Burton's seventeen volumes, or if not in Burton, in Payne, or if not in Burton or Payne, in Monsieur Mardrus's French version. It is entitled "The Caliph and the Daughter of Kisra." The central incident, the luminous point which, as Robert Louis Stevenson tells us should be recognisable in every well-constructed story, is where the daughter of Kisra is sent pancakes by the Caliph. They are in a silver dish, and the Daughter of Kisra, with the generosity that characterised her royal house, has dish and pancakes sent to the young man who gave her a cruse of water when she was in need of refreshment in the streets of Bagdad. The silver dish is offered for sale in the market; the Caliph recognises it, and this leads to very remarkable developments. It may not be the best story ever written, but it is the best instance I know of pattern in story-telling. And the central incident, as I have stated, is the making of the pancakes; they are made by the Caliph himself. Haroun al-Raschid tucks up his sleeves, makes the batter, pours it on the pan, holds it on the brazier, and repeats this over and over until the great silver dish is packed with pancakes. A most memorable incident, I maintain.

I had a grandmother. I don't remember her pancakes; but I have a distinct memory of a special cake she used to make for me. This cake was named in Irish "Cauka Bosca," which means "The cake of the palm"; it had this name because it was shaped in the palm of the maker out of dough left over from baking the bread for next day. In my grandmother's house (this is a long time ago and things have changed since) most of the bread we ate was baked in the pot-oven at night. Probably the mixing and the kneading and the putting of the dough into the oven took place at no great length of time after candle-light. But to a child lying in bed and keeping awake to watch such proceedings they seemed to be at a very remote time in the night. My grandmother's bread was mixed in buttermilk and with soda. When it was put in the oven the coals and ashes of a turf-fire were put around the oven and over it. And on the lid of the pot was placed "the cake of the palm," after sugar and sweet milk had been placed on the top of it.

I have never lost my taste for cakes. After the cakes of folk-culture, such as pancakes and "the cake of the palm," came cakes that were still popular but approaching the cakes of higher cultivation: squares of ginger-bread sold off carts at little fairs or in little shops; ginger-cakes which were very vitalising as one faced a mile of road on a chill evening (in those remote days one could get a bag-ful for twopence). Later on there was a heavy, clammy cake that one bought in pennyworths—Chester-cake it was called. It was related that the ingredients of this cake were always mixed in beer—in porter—and this rumour added to the worth of the cake, to our minds, by giving it a dark and secret origin. And, still on the border between the cakes of folk-culture and the cakes of higher cultivation, there were spiced cakes and cream tarts.

Then came cakes of the higher cultivation—cakes with icings, cakes with rare fruits crowning them and embedded in them; cakes that are the creations of meditative and daring intelligences. All such cakes are a temptation to me—all, I should say, except cakes that have chocolate

outside or inside of them. I think such cakes are mistakes. I see people whose tastes I know to be indisputable eating them, and it is as if I saw them reading the longer poems of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Chocolate cakes are not for me.

I do not know what ingredients should go into a cake, or how the ingredients should be combined, or how the combination should be baked. But I know the temper in which cakes should be made. The temper should be that of affection and light-heartedness. Soups can be made by slaves. Meats may be cooked by mockers and salads mixed by suspicious, cross-eyed servitors. Fish and fowl can be prepared by fleshly men sunk in infamies. But cakes can only be made by the candid. Everyone knows that Cinderella could make cakes and that her jealous half-sisters couldn't; and it is clear to Shakespearean scholars that Cordelia was a cake-maker. "I offer you cakes and friendship," said a remarkable lady to me once. She, being the most experienced lady in Dublin, knew that these two went together. I cherish her friendship still and have happy memories of her cakes. And I know a lady in Chicago whose cakes (or should I call them cates?) are the sort that the Queen of Sheba gave Solomon when full of friendship for him.

I remember that there used to be a cake-maker in this quarter who made cakes in his own little stall. He was a Constantinopolitan; perhaps he made cakes as the Caliph did, tucking up his sleeves and holding the pan above the brazier. But I could not recall his method and was teased into going in search of his stall. Three little shops were together: I remembered them; the first sold fire-wood and had, as is the pleasant fashion in Paris, logs painted all over its front, the round ends showing notches and the grain: intended to be representational this shining pattern of logs was so stylised as to be symbolic, evoking the lives of wood-cutters dwelling in huts in château-surrounding forests. Almost touching upon this shop was another outside of which were hanging three deep, richly glowing copper basins. The Constantinopolitan's was betwe n the two. The stall was so small that there was barely room for the kneading-board, the cauldron of oil, and the cake-maker himself. He wore no turban, no baggy trousers; the only objects aroun d him that suggested the Arabian Nights were a high water-jar and a brass lamp. I ordered a couple of his cakes. He punched out a circle on the dough on his kneading-board, and punched a hole in that circle of dough; then he plunged the piece into the cauldron of boiling oil. He took it out, crisp and swollen, oily, ring-shaped, and golden-brown. Making another he put the couple in paper for me. They were the sort that is known in America as dough-nuts, and were admirable of their kind.

Padraic Colum.

ILLIC JACET

THIS was his little house;
One moth-bright eye
Looks through the cypress boughs
At the starry sky.

His door I never crossed
But still preferred
Some prehistoric ghost
Or even a bird.

We went one day to church,
His friends and he;
We left him in the lurch,
As it seemed to me.

But still he often says,
"You know the house;
You must one of these days
Drop in on us."

A. J. Young.

BLACK MICHAEL

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach: A Character Sketch. By Lady Victoria Hicks-Beach. Two Vols. Macmillan. 30s.

Many years ago a famous political satirist asked, for some reason best known to himself, "What fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies?" the answer presumably being the butchers' meat there extended for sale. In the same mocking spirit the question might be asked: "What fills the booksellers' shops with stout biographies?" the answer being "The lives of extinct Cabinet Ministers." And indeed the list is already of formidable length. Were anyone to have the curiosity to take a pencil, and a sheet of paper, and with the catalogue of the London library by his side, to seek to make out a list of all the biographies of Cabinet Ministers published during the last hundred years, the very names of these extinct functionaries would by themselves be a political education. Whether at the same time it would be a liberal education is a matter lying beyond the scope of our present inquiry.

The latest of these biographies is the Life, in two volumes, of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who for more than forty years was in every sense of the word an ornament of the House of Commons, filling at various times the offices of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Minister of State for the Colonies, President of the Board of Trade, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and for a short period Leader of the House. Is it any wonder that it has taken two octavo volumes and seven hundred and sixty-five pages of solid print for a conscientious daughter to plod through the life, from the cradle to the House of Lords, of one who, though he may never have attained the full stature of political greatness, was from first to last a dintinguished man, and what is perhaps more remarkable, an honest politician, meaning by this last ambiguous phrase a politician distinguished by his honesty.

As for the biography itself, it must be pronounced a good book, conspicuously free from the usual faults of a family record. If it is found too long, that only means it is too conscientiously composed and narrates in detail what might have been scamped. Of exaggeration of personal merit and over-praise of achievement, no traces are visible. It is the modest biography of a modest though virile man.

One of the difficulties in the way of this particular biographer is a strange one. She knew her father very well in his home life, but never sat with him in the House of Commons. In his West Country Sir Michael, however reserved in manner, was the mildest mannered of parents, and there is nothing in these volumes that would justify the belief that he ever dropped so much as a single oath in the presence of Lady Lucy or any of his daughters, or was ever heard to curse a footman for dropping a plate.

And yet Lady Victoria cannot have escaped the knowledge that for years the lobbies of the House of Commons rang with terrible tales of the outrageous and unprintable language of "Black Michael," whenever irritated by the impudence and impertinences of certain forward-pushing members of the rank and file of his own party, who had the effrontery and daring to force their way into his private room. If one-half the stories that used to be circulated of these lively incidents had foundation in actual fact, Sir Michael's command of the vernacular was as remarkable as the "soundness" of his Church principles, of which we have gratifying assurances.

To follow Sir Michael's parliamentary career, which began in Mr. Disraeli's Government in 1874 as Chief Secretary for Ireland (though on this first occasion without a seat in the Cabinet) and ended in January, 1906, when after Mr. Balfour's retirement from office and defeat at the polls, he sought shelter as the Earl St. Aldwyn in the House of Lords, would simply be to epitomise Lady Victoria's two volumes without conferring pleasure upon any mortal soul. Yet the man himself had about him, as well after his death as in his life, a singular attractiveness that lives most pleasantly in the memories even of those who, like the present writer, had but a slender personal acquaintance with him, and that only during his later years.

His biographer in her opening words strikes a sombre note.

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In the few pages devoted to this somewhat dismal pedigree of respectability, two names arise out of the abyss and challenge the surprised attention of the reader, John Locke and Sydney Smith! The last-mentioned divine who so unexpectedly presents

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FABER AND FABER

himself was for a few years the private tutor of Sir Michael's grandfather, and a very conscientious tutor he proved himself to be, as the following extract from one of his letters to his employer proves only too convincingly:

> I had flattered myself that it would have been in my power to give him imperceptibly a taste for books and mental improvement. I am now convinced that whatever share of knowledge Michael may gain by reading with me it is quite out of my power to give him a taste for books in that degree which I think useful and ornamental to his situation of life. Do not be disheartened by this opinion. Michael will be as I have often told you a very worthy prudent man with a sufficient share of sound understanding, an excellent heart, and manners soft and gentlemanlike, and though literature is an excellent addition to all these, it is hardly worth the cost of them. (*Life of Sydney Smith* by his daughter, Vol. I).

The elder Beach, who had no great taste for books himself, was, we expect, quite satisfied with the tutor's account of his youthful charge—the native soil being more rugged than rich. As for the other great name, John Locke, the master-mind of the seventeenth century, who came into the Hicks family *ex parte materna*, it must be left to some more ingenious writer to discover any resemblances between him and the Sir Michael we are concerned with, as only one resemblance occurs to me. John Locke, we feel certain, would never have been quite comfortable in the same Cabinet with Arthur Balfour! Their temperaments were too unlike.

Sir Michael's first job was Ireland, and an excellent Irish Secretary he made. It is noticeable, if inexplicable, that so-called Tory Chief Secretaries have usually been more popular and effective than so-called Liberal ones—Hicks-Beach, the two Balfours, George Wyndham, and Walter Long, for example. Despite all the abuse hurled at these officials they were more popular with the Nationalists than with the landlord class. Sir Michael's Educational Reforms, Arthur Balfour's Congested District Board, Wyndham's Land Act, Gerald Balfour's Local Government Act (a far more dangerous experiment from the Act of Union point of view than Gladstonian Home Rule) were all great achievements. I remember a very noisy and notorious Irish Nationalist member of Parliament saying to me:

> We all like Walter Long. He is neither a prig nor a pedant, but he has one most amusing weakness. He simply cannot bear being called a liar. Call him that, and his bald head becomes as red as the setting sun.

My reply was that Long's one weakness was probably due to his Irish blood, for no Englishman or Scotsman would mind a sou what an angry Irishman called him in his wrath.

Sir Michael, though crammed to the hilt with English prejudices, had very few Irish ones and, though a hard-hit English landlord, had real sympathy with the wretched cotters on an Irish estate. His letter to Lord Clanricarde is an admirable bit of ironical and controlled indignation. As he was also a strong denominational educationist, he got on very well with the Irish bishops.

His next job was South Africa and he soon regretted the Chief Secretary's lovely lodge in the Phœnix Park. Butt, Parnell, Redmond, and Dillon were better fellows than Sir Bartle Frere and Sir Theophilus Shepstone, names of ill-omen in English ears. Lady Victoria tells the South African story very well.

Towards the close of Sir Michael's political life, the black, impending shadow of Mr. Chamberlain obscured the horizon. A sound political and party instinct made Sir Michael from the beginning realise that Mr. Balfour was a half-hearted Free Trader, even if that; and also that he was clinging to office far too long. Sir Michael also realised that he himself was not the man to lead the Tory Free Traders to an open revolt against their chief, who knew so well how to circumvent one colleague and conciliate another.

Sir Michael had always enjoyed so far as his seat was concerned an easy political life. For twenty years he sat with only one contest for East Gloucestershire and for another twenty years, also with only one fight, for West Bristol.

He could have retained his Bristol seat with perfect safety, despite the few grunts and groans of his committee, for he was immensely popular in the city and no Liberal voter would have cast a vote against him, but he did not like the notion of being returned by Liberal votes, and accordingly retired into the caverns of the House of Lords, thereby inflicting a blow on the Free Trade cause, for his speeches on that subject were alike matchless in quality and persuasive in tone. As Lord Hartington was, perhaps, the most effective anti-Home Rule speaker in the country, so Hicks-Beach might have become the most effective anti-Chamberlain speaker.

In later years, when the present writer occasionally met Lord St. Aldwyn at Grillions, he spoke with great freedom about his former colleagues, and made no concealment of his chagrins, disappointments, and dislikes, though always after a dignified and moderate fashion. But he was one of those politicians, we suspect, who are more at ease when talking to a political opponent than to one of their own old set, if indeed Sir Michael ever had a set of his own.

He was as fine a specimen of an English Conservative county member as was ever seen in the House of Commons, and we congratulate his daughter upon the completion of a task, none the easier because her subject did not lend himself to the many tricks and antics of the modern biographer.

Augustine Birrell.

SCOTT

Sir Walter Scott. By John Buchan. Cassell. 9s. 6d.
The Laird of Abbotsford. By Dame Una Pope-Hennessy. Putnam. 7s. 6d.

Scott is a figure at once so national and, to anyone aware of the secular growth of letters, so European that we need both the native and the foreign portrait. Mr. Stephen Gwynn has given us, nobly, the second. Dr. Buchan has now undertaken the first, and made a worthy companion to his *Montrose*. His success as a teller of excellent popular stories—though *Witchwood* and *Midwinter* are more than that, and the old Boer in *Mr. Standfast* a character worthy of Sir Walter himself—has obscured his qualities as a man of letters: yet few writers of our time are better equipped, by both native gifts and acquired, for a task that needs very large qualifications. He is an historian of the humane tradition, a critic whose broad scholarship is quickened and fired by warm sympathy and cool judgment: he writes a grave, masculine, and well-bred prose, he can value men, and for this subject in special he has bred in the blood and in the heart that sense of the past as inherent in the present—and here of the precisely relevant past—that is native to a Scot as to a Frenchman, and so curiously rare in the English mind that most Englishmen feel awkward in face of it, as if it were a kind of affectation.

These gifts have been used. The comely broad-browed format of the book does not belie it. This is a good portrait against lively history: the criticism—there is remarkably little really good *literary* criticism of Scott's work as it stands—is perhaps the best that has been written on its subject. History, portrait, and criticism are a unity: we tend nowadays to look down on the narrative gift (it is not a thing a man can have at will), but the spring and shapeliness of this full, detailed, and copious study must be praised in spite of all fashions, as must its mere writing, even at the risk of seeming to overpraise.

The dominant of the portrait is justice, or, more accurately, justness. Here is no pæan on a popular idol, any more than a cheapening of the great dead to please the petty conceit of little living, who delight, like the wild ass, and tame ones, to spurn with the hoof. He is, perhaps, a little shy of Scott's conversion to "the suffering and Episcopal Church of Scotland": it meant something to Scott. But the testing point is the financial involvements. He faces these, not extenuating Scott's share of the blame, yet understanding the temptation of circumstances for the gambling streak in him, the streak that must be in the great man of action he might have been: there is something of it in all generous natures, and few men who lost have so paid their debts of honour. The cause of the crash, the careless readiness to mortgage the future, was the one sole point in which Scott was spoilt by success. He was the idol of half Europe, adored as Mr. Charlie Chaplin is adored: and the finest minds of his time revered him both as man and as creator. Yet that never spoilt him in any human relation, or weakened—the line is hackneyed and we scoff at the qualities, the worse for us!—his truth and honour, freedom and courtesy. He got the best out of every man he met, from Byron and George IV to the Jeddart burglar—not only men, but every living creature who came about him, to the very poultry. And no man ever had less conceit, or a finer sense of pride, for himself and others. "He

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has done with his chivalry": but the world has not. His memorial is in the spirit of men.

He is set here for us like a tree in its soil. The actual sketch of background is not extensive, but there are the outlines, and one cannot expect more in the space of one volume that has to contain so much: their quality is visible in the statesman's comprehension that regards that much-guyed episode, the royal visit of 1822. There is enough for the foreign reader to gain some sense of perspective, and for the native one to have confidence. One Border man is writing of another: we are never far from the cloven peak of the Eildons, from that country of splendid farming and wild moors, where the Savoy Band has even yet not killed the memory of old wars, not ignoble, or of the *weltanschauung* of the ballads.

This sense of the fact *in its place* informs the criticism: Scott's writings are seen in their full setting, historical, social, and in the development of European letters, and they are judged and analysed also, as is right, in themselves. The criticism is wise, ripe, and balanced: here and there one may contest a detail—Rob Roy to me, for instance, is alive enough, but not "Highland" as Evan MacCombich, say, is Highland, and I would put *The Bride of Lammermoor* nearer the summit. But these trifles merely salt one's pleasure. Dr. Buchan understands what Scott attempted, and judges him in terms of it—a rare gift in critics of fiction: his discussion of the historical novel, its quiddity, its development, and its special gift, that

> it permits that isolation of essentials from accidentals, and that critical detachment which is of the essence of the novelist's art, and which is hard to attain when he is clogged with "a turbid mixture of contemporaneousness,"

shows how sound is the basis for the discussion alike of the failures, of the good minors like the exciting fairy tales of *Quentin Durward* and *Ivanhoe*, the lively Dekker-and-Heywood pastiche of *Nigel*, and of those that range from great to magnificent. He is equally sound on the evocations of history, actual or fantastic—for except in *Quentin Durward*, *Nigel*, and *Woodstock*, Scott was never good abroad, or, but in the former two, before 1640—on the character-drawing, where he knows how to value that *vivida vis animi* which so outlasts the desiccations of dissection, and on the style, doing justice alike to its careless laxities and the magnificent shapes of its best, whether English like Clavers' speech on death, or Scots like almost any of the dialogue from Meg Dods to Meg Merrilies. The book leaves one richer in experience not only of Scott but of the craft of letters.

Dame Una Pope-Hennessy's Centenary study suggests less an interest in a man or a writer than an arrangement of someone "in the news" to enrich the conversation of barbers' assistants—except that their profession, as a rule, knows the difference between the "real" and the "perfect" gent. Its glib chatter-about-Harriet, its arch vacuity of standards in life or letters, its *refaned* patronage of anyone so ignorant as to be born before '87 and live out of London, are a quaint mixture of the evening paper and Mrs. Elton talking about Jane Fairfax. The word it inevitably asks for is "suburban," though the comments on the death of Lady Scott make that rather severe to the breeding of Maple Grove.

Agnes Mure Mackenzie.

STRINDBERG

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This is the third volume in the edition of Strindberg's plays issued by the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation. So far no method of grouping the plays has been adopted, and it seems unlikely that the edition will be complete before 1950. The first volume contains the last plays. Volume two begins with a fairy play, *Lucky Peter's Travels*, and goes on with *The Father* and *Miss Julie*; and in this third volume, a sense of purpose belatedly emerging, we are given four historical plays—*Master Olof* (1872), and *Gustav Vasa, Eric XIV, The Saga of the Folkungs*, all written in 1899.

The chronology of Strindberg's plays is important, because his art grew directly from his life. He once asserted that the only fiction worth while is that which deals unreservedly with the author's own self; and though this applies less to his plays, we must take his work on his own terms if we wish to understand it. The plays collected in this volume are a modern embodiment of Swedish history, but one can see in them also the drama of Strindberg's own spiritual adventures. Despite their objectivity, they stage the conflicts and passions which he himself experienced. At different times he held every shade of belief about religion, ethics, philosophy, art, science, politics and human nature, and they conflicted; his hatred of life concealed a love of it, his eccentricities went with an almost sentimental regard for the normal and ordinary, he was sceptic and Swedenborgian in the same hour. His nature was kaleidoscopic, like a box containing a pattern of vari-coloured glasses which the least shake will alter. No man was ever born with such a genius for self-revelation and for the invention of new dramatic forms in which to project himself.

It is difficult for English readers to form an adequate idea of Strindberg's drama because his best work is never performed in England. We may be grateful to the compilers of the present edition for giving us in this volume several plays which have not before been translated. Reading them, one cannot possibly miss their fine dramatic qualities: no more living historical drama has been written in modern times. They are the product of the year 1899, a year which belongs to the most important and fertile period of Strindberg's life. Between 1897 and 1899 he wrote these plays: *Advent; To Damascus, Parts I and II; There are Crimes and Crimes; Gustav Vasa; Eric XIV; The Saga of the Folkungs.* This outburst of creative energy, amazing even for Strindberg, followed three years in which he wrote nothing except scientific articles and a Journal. He lived alone in Paris, an exile, forty-five years of age, solitary, ill and tormented. His second wife, an Austrian, had gone to Saxen to nurse their sick child, and though a few letters had passed, conciliatory, promising reunion, Strindberg's inevitable bitterness prevailed, and she had taken out papers for divorce. In Paris he found the solitude and phantasmagoria of faces which only a large town can offer, and the bitter hatreds and disappointments of his life took shape. I quote two pictures which he gives of himself at this time:

> They sit down to table, and the evening meal begins with a great deal of noise and outbursts of hilarity, for the young artists who are present feel themselves at home here. A certain familiarity of gestures and attitudes, a tone which is anything but domestic, repels me and depresses me indescribably. In the middle of the orgy my sadness calls up to my inner vision a picture of the peaceful home of my wife. The Christmas tree, the mistletoe, my little daughter, her deserted mother. Pangs of conscience seize me; I stand up, plead ill-health as an excuse, and depart . . . . I turn into the Boulevard Montparnasse, and let myself fall on a seat of the terrace of the Lilas brewery. A glass of good absinthe comforts me for some minutes. Then there fall on me a set of cocottes and students who strike me on the face with switches. As though driven by furies, I leave my glass of absinthe standing, and hasten to seek for another at the Café François Premier on the Boulevard St. Michel. Out of the frying-pan into the fire! A second troop shout at me, "There is the hermit!" Driven forth again I fly home, accompanied by the unnerving tones of the mirliton pipes.

An August afternoon:

> Absolutely alone, I take my midday meal in my room. For eight days I have not heard the sound of my own voice, which begins to grow feeble for want of exercise. I haven't a sou left, and my tobacco and postage stamps run out. Then I rally my will power for a last attempt. I *will* make gold, by the dry process. I manage to borrow some money and procure the necessary apparatus: an oven, smelting-saucepans, wood-coals, bellows, and tongs. The heat is terrific and, like a workman in a smithy, I sweat before the open fire, stripped to the waist. But sparrows have built their nests in the chimney, and smoke pours out of it into the room. I feel like going mad over this first attempt, my headaches and the frustration of my efforts; for everything goes wrong. I have smelted the mass of metal in the fire and look inside the saucepan. The borax has formed within it a death's head with two glowing eyes which seem to pierce my soul with uncanny irony. Not a grain of gold is there and I give up all further efforts.

He tried to make gold from baser metals, and to find heaven in a world of Swedenborgian hells. A horde of devils, witches, doppelgangers beset him, bringing with them the landscape of hell and a whole apparatus of evil attack and omens. He was stabbed by "electrical" attacks which prevented sleep, and imagined that he was being murdered. Wherever he went, noises interrupted. He asked others. Yes, they heard noises. Occasionally he met friends who were ill and questioned them—their symptoms corresponded with his own! "You too," he would say to one after another, and go home indescribably saddened and yet relieved, to face the terror of the night. After months of torment and nightmare, he decided to run away. One Sunday morning he packed his things and went away early to the Jardin des Plantes. Blessed relief! It seemed another Eden! He was

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able to walk and enjoy the quiet, looking round in the sunlight at the stones, "then the vegetable and animal kingdom, till I come to man." The passage describing this incident is profoundly moving. It might be taken as a symbol of his life and all those years of inferno; for at the end of them his mind cleared, he spent a year travelling round Sweden collecting material for a book on Swedish flowers, and in the next two years wrote six of his finest plays.

I have stressed these incidents and the state of Strindberg's mind at the time, because they were the deepest and the most tragic experiences of his life. It should not surprise that I use the words "deep" and "tragic" for the experiences of a man who was plainly going mad and only recovered by a miracle. For in Strindberg's case they are true. He was a neurasthenic, as well as a man of genius. All his actions, his poverty, his demoniac religion, his hatred of women and sense of social inferiority—the outlets, if not the springs, of his life and art—were intensified by neurasthenia. He looked at himself and at other people with the X-rays of suspicion. At first view there seem even to be two Strindbergs, so wide is the divergence between his spiritual and physical life, so petty, it may seem, the symbolism of his thought. One is a Dickensian comic character, Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's "henpecked Bluebeard," suspicious of himself, his wife, the neighbours, the servants, the dog: the sort of man who surprises a visitor with the remark, "At two o'clock I am going to be sick." That is Strindberg seen through the caricaturist's lens: it takes no account of his genius. The other Strindberg, the internal, baffled and wandering spirit, as distorted perhaps as the caricature, but magnificently strong and passionate and real, a great dramatist who used his medium with an intensely personal and living touch such as I can feel in the work of no other recent artist except Van Gogh: this is the Strindberg of the books and plays. The two are really one because his spiritual conflicts are inseparable from mental and physical obsessions.

Now, the crisis of his life found its final expression in a trilogy, *To Damascus*. This play is considered by foreign critics whose opinion I respect to be Strindberg's masterpiece. It has never been translated into English. A typescript version, "authorised by Strindberg," exists at the British Museum, but this contains only the first play of the trilogy, and even then omits an indispensable scene. It is an astounding performance, as bare and direct as Greek tragedy, with a nightmare edge which is terrifying. The characters and setting are modern, the theme—man's fall and redemption—is universal. It is a combination of morality play and modern expressionist drama: *Swanwhite*, *The Dream Play*, *Legends* and *Zones of the Spirit* in one. It has caught, too, in moments of beauty, the stillness of that Sunday morning in the Jardin des Plantes. From what I have seen of the play I believe that it is impossible to make an estimate of Strindberg's full importance as a dramatist without having read it. When will the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation provide us with a translation?

G. W. Stonier.

FROM FACT TO FICTION

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It is unfortunate that such a misleading term as "fiction" should ever have found common acceptance as describing the art of the novelist. It implies that the novelist is concerned with fantasy rather than with fact, or rather that he has no concern with fact at all, whereas the scenes, the characters, and often the plots of the majority of novels are the results of the author's observation. These results, it is true, may be so transmuted by the imagination that they lose particular importance in a universal significance, or they may be so badly disguised that the novelist finds himself facing a charge of libel. Perhaps it is the publicity given to writs for libel which has led the public to believe that it is abnormal for the novelist to profit from his observation of life, and has given rise to the curious convention that he just "imagines" everything. The illusion is fostered by the admitted irrelevance of the percentage of fact to fiction in a novel in assessing its worth.

The foregoing remarks, however, do not apply to Mr. Street, who has not cast his autobiography into the form of a novel. *Farmer's Glory* is a direct and unashamed record of fact, but of fact observed with a delicacy and a penetration which any novelist might envy. The title is a name for a card game sometimes known as "Slippery Ann," and is peculiarly apt for a book which deals with the losing gamble which farming has become in modern England. The opening chapters describe farming in the first decade of the present century, and are full of anecdote and of remembered detail which make a pastoral picture not easily to be forgotten. This section of the book would be valuable if only for Mr. Street's full quotation of that fine South Country song, "Buttercup Joe," the rousing chorus of which we have heard an old countrywoman sing in an unappreciative "pub." But it would be unjust to imply that Mr. Street presents a light opera aspect of farming; as a working farmer, he is too close to the soil to romanticise about it. The middle part of *Farmer's Glory* is a vividly written account of farming in Canada in the three years before the War, which, though more exciting, is less subtle than the beginning; in the last part Mr. Street returns to the Wiltshire farm, and in writing of his struggle with post-war conditions and his eventual triumph by new methods he recaptures much of the finer shading of his earlier picture. The epilogue is to be commended to Lord Beaverbrook.

Herr Wassermann deals with states of the mind rather than with material things, with human relationships rather than with human achievements, although his treatment of them is dispassionate and objective. Dr. Laudin, a distinguished divorce lawyer, who is the central character in *Wedlock*, states the main problem:

> Suppose, for example, that a man were to become tired of his ego—thoroughly and unmitigatedly tired of the despotism of his own character, of this conglomeration of habits, inclinations, pre-occupations, idiosyncrasies of speech and thought. Couldn't one conceive of such a rebellion against one's self?

Dr. Laudin's fatigue becomes intensified, and the longing to escape from himself estranges him from his own wife. He becomes convinced that "the institution of marriage is no longer productive, no longer capable of life. When I see what people do to one another I feel that anarchy would be better, or chaos"; but, finally, he finds that "to lose one's self or to throw it away does not mean to exchange it for another and a higher self; it means an impoverishment that surpasses all imagination and all belief." *Wedlock* is, in fact, a thoughtful and dramatic study of "incompatibility of temperament," which Herr Wassermann apparently thinks is one of the most dangerous diseases afflicting modern civilisation. His solution of the problem which he has posed does not seem entirely satisfactory: Dr. Laudin decides to give up his profession, but for how many, or rather, for how few, people placed in the same unhappy web of circumstances would that be possible?

In Mr. Nichols' *Evensong*, fact still has the upper hand of fantasy. Whether or no Irela is drawn from a great prima donna who died not long ago, the biographical element is clearly strong. Mr. Nichols has not made up his mind whether he wants still to be regarded as the *enfant terrible* who wrote *Twenty-Five* and *Are They the Same at Home*, or as the author of a serious work. The result is that *Evensong* is often dull, and its excellences are not sustained. Irela is cleverly, if cruelly, drawn, but too often the wit becomes cheap and the emphasis exaggerated. Mr. Nichols is merely marking time, and those who hoped for an advance on his previous work will be disappointed.

Herr Lothar's novel also deals with a figure who occupied the limelight, but it is at once more fantastic and more solid. Sebastian had the power of clairvoyance, and being of a simple nature allowed himself to be exploited by the commercial Bimeter; he became afraid of his own power when he applied it to those he loved, and only found his salvation when he discovered that it was not infallible. No brief summary of the plot, however, can convey an adequate impression of a story which is as rich in detail as it is skilfully told. The characters are further from life but quite as alive as those of Herr Wassermann, and the book has been better translated; both are examples of contemporary German fiction which should obtain a wide public in this country.

An irritating "puff" to *Chaos is Come Again* claims that the Petersleys, the family with which it deals, are "representative

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Prof. George Gordon in the *Book Society News:* "I have not for a long time enjoyed any book so much. There are chapters in the book which Cervantes himself might have written—Cervantes, the hoaxer of Sancho Panza, had he and that paunchy peasant both been Irishmen."

Constable

of this chaotic age in which the Normal is only a memory." This absurd statement prepares one for the worst, and, although told with a certain slickness, Mr. Houghton's book is the most deserving of the term "fiction." It abounds in often repeated and shallow generalisations for which the occasional "brightness" of the dialogue does not compensate, and its characters are both lifeless and unreal. There are too many people who can do this kind of thing better.

DRAMA AND VERSE

The Immortal Jew. A Drama by S. R. Lysaght. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

Opus XI and XII. Two Narrative Poems by M. M. T. Hibbart-Gilson. Lane. 7s. 6d.

Poems. By Everest Lewin. Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

The Silver Flute. By Mary Morison Webster. The Poetry Bookshop. 2s. 6d.

The Waiting Room. By Irene Petch. Blackwell. 3s. 6d.

Oxford Poetry, 1931. Edited by Bernard Spencer and Richard Goodman. Blackwell. 3s. 6d.

The Book of London Verse. An Anthology of verse recently produced in The University of London. Compiled and edited by I. Mair Jones and B. Sh. Saklatvala. E. Lahr. 2s.

Verse drama is certainly in a precarious condition and the number of writers attracted by imaginative piety or inclination to that form of art becomes less every year. Mr. S. R. Lysaght's introductory note to his play, *The Immortal Jew*, is, therefore, of interest, for it presents succinctly the problem which confronts those who seek to express their view of life in poetic drama. "Dialogue in verse," he says, "must always seem unnatural when the scene is modern: though, even then, there are occasions when the verse form may compel acceptance." But there is still elbow-room for verse. "In soliloquy, in the disclosure of unspoken thought, the subtler the emotion, the more is needed the interpretation of poetry." The dialogue in Mr. Lysaght's play is in prose and the unspoken passages are in verse: but one cannot help feeling that the severance between the outer and inner drama is a compromise. The plain fact is that verse drama, as a form, whether for chamber reading or stage, is no longer sensitive: technically it has remained completely static. By impassioned devotion and rare imagination, Mr. Gordon Bottomley has indeed given the set form reality, but he is a solitary figure in our period. Imaginative prose drama, on the other hand, has extended its form and, by experiment, found technical means by which the inner and outer life may be expressed at the same time. Take, for instance, the soliloquy, that rigid device in which Mr. Lysaght believes poetry may find refuge. Banished from naturalistic drama, the soliloquy has returned in the rhythmic drama of expressionism, technically developed, so that in such a work as Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* it has become the complete form of the drama.

The dualism of Mr. Lysaght's philosophy accords no doubt with the double form of his play. The legend of the Wandering Jew has degenerated into meaningless melodrama, but Mr. Lysaght has endeavoured to quicken the myth by using it as a symbol for his belief in reincarnation. The racial spitefulness of the mediæval story no longer appeals to us, but Mr. Lysaght's doctrine is certainly disturbing:

> We are our own forefathers! He who seeks
> Excuse in the hereditary stain
> For his misdeeds condemns himself alone.
> He was that very man whose sin begat
> The stain that tarnishes his reborn soul.

Tennyson was content with musing over the idea that our echoes roll from soul to soul: Mr. Lysaght reasserts the secular choice between good and evil. His chronicle drama, which begins in a Bohemian village a century ago and ends a few years after the Great War, is picturesque and at times theatrical. Ambrose Skala, the vacillating "Pilgrim of Eternity," is saved in the last act by belief in a woman's love. But such belief, however mystical, has become a noble convention of poetic thought and Love, even in the abstract, may well be questioned in modern times.

Mr. Hibbart-Gilson makes a similar demand on our faith in good and evil. Experimenting in his long narrative poem, *Because God Thought*, in a form of mixed iambic and trochaic verse, he begins:

> Ere Time bore aught upon his restless wave,
> Life slumbered still without the weak or brave,
> Nothing sprouted from the deep
> Chasms of primeval sleep,
> Nor joy of birth nor sorrow of the grave,

and he is content in a world of ancient predicates. But can we really be lured back to the Garden of Eden, if the trees are a little faded and the flowers no longer dewy? There is no doubt that the higher function of poetry is to resolve the particular into the general, but a habit of diction, however pleasant, may not communicate its pleasure to others in the same measure. Mr. Lewin, for instance, can wander at will along—

> The lawn of dreams beside the stream Despair
> Where Hope lies bound and Courage blinded strays,

but, lacking imaginative enterprise, his poems ease rather than arrest attention.

A predominant emotion, however, can stimulate the personal reaction which we need in verse. The sense of loss expressed in *The Silver Flute*, by Mrs. Mary Morison Webster, that sense which gives to common things the poignant reality of past associations, is very moving. There is a personal directness, a perplexity in these poems which is modern:

> I set aside the things I wear,
> Beads, silks and mundane stuffs;
> Still my anxious body's there,
> I can not be bare enough.
> Not till I shed flesh and bone,
> Divest myself of clay, I'll be
> Quite sufficiently alone
> For mine ownself's company.

Youthful eagerness, as an emotion in itself, is always attractive, and Miss Irene Petch, in *The Waiting Room*, persuades us that the world is really "full of a number of things," though she is as yet content with neat and delighted statement.

Youth, however, is not enough in itself for art, since it must struggle through self-consciousness and is compelled by timidity to hide behind masks. Disillusion predominates in *Oxford Poetry 1931*. Mr. Gilbert Highet, for instance, complains that

> Our souls abort in fog and fume
> Speechless among mechanic din,

and Mr. J. P. Scott cries out:

> This life has not a thing to give.
> Oh God, if I could only live.

In *The Book of London Verse*, a first anthology from the University of London, Daphne and Celia reappear, and romance wins. Youth is really romantic at heart, but first poetry is shy, timid, easily frightened away by banter or practical joke. As the University College of London is non-residential, the contrast between these two anthologies suggests an obvious subject for debate.

Austin Clarke.

SIGHTS

Les Spectacles à Travers les Ages. Editions du Cygne. Paris.

"Theatre," "Circus," "Music-Hall," "Café Concerts," "Cabarets Artistiques"—these five sub-titles to this book of 366 pages render it a formidable parcel to carry under the arm—and as I took it along, I wondered: "Will it be as heavy as all that to read?" I wondered how a single man could have the patience or the audacity to write as much as I was carrying.

Arriving at home, I discovered, to my relief, that the publishers had entrusted an editor, Monsieur Denys Amiel, with the pleasant task of getting nine other gentlemen, scholars of this, that and the other, to write the book for him.

I also discovered that the subjects were eleven. To Monsieur H. G. Ibels, whose name is well known to Londoners, fell a double share of work—he had to write on "Theatrical Costume" and on "Le Café Concert et le Chanson": and these two sections of the book he illustrates by carefully chosen drawings and etchings of the first half of the nineteenth century, and by a number of photographs of the later half—and he throws in gratis several of his own inimitable sketches. This is the part of the book which pleases me best—this, and a chapter on "Les Cabarets Littéraires et Artistiques," by Monsieur Achille Astre; and two others,

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The Du Barry

KARL VON SCHUMACHER. Trans- by Dorothy M. Richardson. Illus. 12/6

emely well done."—DR. J. M. BULLOCH.
agnificent translator."—*Time and Tide.*
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"Le Music Hall" and "Les Cirques," by Monsieur Chabrier and that famous historian of the French theatre, Monsieur Henry Lyonnet.

I was extremely pleased to see the name of Monsieur Lyonnet in the midst of so many names quite new to me—especially pleased to-day, for I had just procured a copy of his Dictionary of French Actors and Actresses—a book which for years had eluded me—a book which helped to make possible most other books written since 1900 on the French theatre.

Whether this volume by the nine authors will serve so noble a purpose as did Henry Lyonnet's of about thirty years ago I cannot tell—I should hardly think so: but then it is not, I am assured, a book for scholars, so much as a book made deliberately to please a wide public.

This being the case, the second, fourth, fifth and sixth sections could perfectly well have been omitted, and no harm done. As it is, I note quite a few errors in those sections.

In the chapter by M. Siclis about the architecture of theatres, while eight designs and excellent information are given to us about the most up-to-date flash theatre in Paris—the Théâtre Pigalle, designed by Monsieur Siclis—and while a passing compliment is chucked rapidly to Poelzig (spelt Paelzig) and the Grosses Schauspielhaus—spelt *Scan*spielhaus (and this same Grosses Schauspielhaus is referred to as a *constructeur distingué*)—the ancient theatre comes off no better. "Galli Bibiena, the son of Bibiena," doth not make for clearness; and to write the "théâtre de Tordinon," instead of "Teatro Tor di Nona," is no happier: added to this, the writer speaks of it as having been constructed in 1675, whereas no such theatre was built in 1675. He gives two more dates, on the same page, which seem to me doubtful. I haven't my books handy, so I must let them pass. All I would point out is that the book is not as exact as a book of the kind should be—even one which purposes to please that public, comically called the public.

Monsieur André Boll, on page 145, in his notes on Sceneries, calls Servandoni "the true ancestor of *décor de théâtre*," which is anything but the case. And, unfortunately, he goes on to call "Bibiena Galli" (he means Galli Bibiena) one of Servandoni's successors. Now Servandoni, the Florentine, was born in 1695, whereas Ferdinando Bibiena was born in 1657, Francesco Bibiena in 1659, and Alessandro Bibiena in 1687; and in every sense of the word, it was Servandoni who was the follower.

Those who write little bits of history, like Monsieur Boll and myself, if we cannot do more than emulate the true historians, like Dr. Allardyce Nicoll, Monsieur Lyonnet and Dr. Gregor, can anyhow be as careful as possible in our attempts to be correct. I always take that as my aim, and if I miss the bull's-eye, I can generally get somewhere within the target—but my confrère, Boll, seems to be so overcome by the fact that Servandoni migrated to Paris, and that the Bibienas never came near the place, that he is seized with a great and rollicking sense of patriotism, and, aiming wildly, proclaims Servandoni from the house-tops . . . and, incidentally, topples over in doing so. It's a Parisian habit to laud Servandoni at the expense of the Galli family: Germain Bapst, years ago, claimed that Servandoni "invented the principle of oblique perspective," and used it first in 1728—that is, about seventeen years after Ferdinando Bibiena had done so in Parma . . . though of the exact year I am not sure, without my books of reference.

So I am not as well pleased with the first part of this handsome quarto, with its riot of pictures, as I am with the enjoyable last 164 pages.

Among the pictures there is a design by Pochet, which represents Rachel; and from this caricature, seen for the first time, I learn more about her than I ever knew before. This design has to be seen to be appreciated: one can merely record that it shows the tragedienne looking as no other designer but Pochet ever showed her. Pochet has made her live.

The same day that I saw this Pochet design, I chanced into a Paris library, and was shown a large painting or pastel of Rachel—made by Madame O'Connell, her friend. It showed the same woman that Pochet had shown in his caricature . . . whereas the famous made-up affair—the portrait of her by Edouard Dubuffe, painted in London in 1850, and which hangs in the Comédie Française—is a dummy. J. L. Gérome painted her, in 1859, as *La Tragédie*, and here we get something like her, too; but in his painting we see less of the Jewess than in the two pictures I have come across to-day. Madame O'Connell's deserves to be in some national collection.

If I have not praised as much in the book on *Les Spectacles* as I should like to have done, it is only that in Paris to-day so many remarkable books on the theatre are appearing, and the standard is so high, that if I was pleased I was at the same time a little disappointed.

The volume is the first of a series of three—the other two will be entitled, *La Danse à travers les Ages* and *Le Cinéma*—the former to appear at the end of March, and the latter at the end of June, 1932. The three are not sold separately, and together cost 425 francs, which is about five pounds.

Edward Gordon Craig.

THIS SELF

The Questing Beast. By Oliver Baldwin. Grayson. 10s. 6d.

The Defeat of Baudelaire. By R. Laforgue. Hogarth Press. 10s. 6d.

But for the Grace of God. By J. W. N. Sullivan. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Aurelia. By Gérard de Nerval. Trans. by R. Aldington. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

Perplexities. By E. R. Leigh. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.

Of Unsound Mind. By E. T. Lean. Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d.

Nobody Asked You. By Yvonne Cloud. Willy Nilly Press. 7s. 6d.

Free Love. By A. Kollontai. Dent. 7s. 6d.

"I must write"—so Miss Leigh asseverates at the beginning of *Perplexities*; her mood of vehement determination is too commonly regarded as an excuse. It is only an explanation, which could be given by good authors as well as bad, and leaves its victims at the mercy of such unnecessary triflers as Dr. Laforgue, who, in his investigation of Baudelaire's need to write, very neatly exposes his own, without carrying the problem of Baudelaire any farther than it was taken by Porché. Dr. Laforgue brings to his analysis a peculiar French sentimentality that will entertain or repel. Baudelaire was fond of his mother, Baudelaire was suckled, Baudelaire the man drank brandy. And so

> The mouth also had to substitute for organs whose normal use was forbidden to Baudelaire. Not only did he taste the pleasure of seeing, but also that of drinking, as well as that of smelling, for that matter. And I believe I am justified in assuming that, for our patient, brandy was substituted for the milk of a nurse, of a mother whose breast he had never forgotten.

And the brandy-drinkers who have forgotten their mothers, whence is their appetite? Compensation for spilt milk, no doubt. Baudelaire certainly had to write; and we too admit the necessity, for he does more than express this self, he extends it so that we can believe in a world dependent on him, but not conditioned by him and his opinions, not unaware of other worldliness.

The rest of these books are sadly so conditioned. Mr. Baldwin's is the best of the living, for his egotism is naive and touching. He has been hurt by the world, and is still in the mood in which the child slaps the naughty furniture; but he is trying to learn, and is aware of his ignorance. Only a harsh critic would be severe on a man whom Dr. Lyttelton ordered to regard his school days as the happiest of his life. He found them "the most useless and unhappy," and those who read this account of his experience in Turkish and Bolshevist prisons will be able to appreciate what Eton has meant to one boy. Mr. Sullivan's book is not straight autobiography. Disguised as Shaughnessy, he tells us of his school days and an adolescence from which he has never escaped. His one modern novelist, when he was young, was Wells, and Shaughnessy, a damp-handed enthusiast with a tendency to sentimental sensualism, is a pure Wells character. Indeed, in reading this book I realised suddenly how ghastly a responsibility H. G. has for our world—earnest, slightly perspiring, voluble young men and gawky ill-mannered young women. The fashion in them is passing now, except in the provinces; but Mr. Sullivan's book is an embarrassingly life-like picture of a very shy-making society. Some of us prefer the decadent, sad, more mannered virtuosity of poor Nerval, some of whose stories and sketches Mr. Aldington has rendered into English. Nerval is fairly well known to students of the last century—there have also been at least two previous versions of *Sylvie*, and Mr. Symons has written about him. The best thing

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in this book are Miss Binder's moving and singularly appropriate lithographs, in which she shows a familiarity, all too uncommon, with that fine artist, Odilon Redon.

The novel is the time-honoured vehicle of the ego; and our four other books have little claim to notice except as exposures. The nastiest and the most capable is Miss Cloud's, a detailed study in accidental degeneration. The book moves from the world of Proust to the world of Petronius, and makes us realise uneasily how close together those worlds, after all, are. It is a book of masks and phases, coloured and quite flat. The pleasantest of the four is *Of Unsound Mind*, a harmless, tidily written story of school and study and calf-love; the stupidest is *Free Love*, which has the harsh brightness of a lecture often repeated. The people are parrots, with voices as shrill, and sayings as mechanical. Miss Leigh's *Perplexities* is properly entitled. The author wants to know, and regards ignorance as an induced and irrevocable condition, rather than as a state from which will can remove any sufferer. The author may have been correct in thinking she "must write"; but there was no need to publish. R. E. R.

CHARLES V

Emperor of the West. By D. B. Wyndham Lewis. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Wyndham Lewis, as might be expected, has given us in this book a very lively and vigorous sketch of the career of the man who, as he was the last Emperor to be crowned at Rome, may be said, though he had many successors, to have been the last of the Holy Roman Emperors. Charles was certainly one of the greatest of the line; and he ruled through perhaps the most decisive period in all Imperial history. He was the last Cæsar who could make more than a shadowy claim to wield one of St. Peter's two swords.

As the dispute of which he saw the beginning is still undecided, the historian of his reign is like the first historian of the wars out of which the Roman Empire sprang. He is a Pollio who

> tractat et incedit per ignes
> suppositos cineri doloso.

It is probably impossible for him to be quite impartial. If he is a Catholic, he will see the struggle in one aspect; if a Protestant, in another. It must be said for Mr. Lewis that he makes an effort (not always we think a successful effort) to see both sides. He has also the merit that he does not conceal his opinions. He wears his uniform openly and indeed defiantly; he announces loudly that he is a warrior in the Catholic army, and gives fair warning to his opponents to be on their guard. Protestants will know, from the very first page, that this is a Catholic book—and take heed.

As to the view of Charles's character which he gives, we think he is right. Charles was, at least when compared with the other leading statesmen of his time, honest and above board. His word, except on two or three occasions, was his bond. He was magnanimous, and he was a gentleman; while Francis I was at best a *preux chevalier*, and few, even among Henry VIII's warmest admirers, would ascribe to him either gentlemanliness or magnanimity. The well-known story of Charles's refusal to disturb Luther's tomb—"I war not with the dead"—which stirs the admiration alike of Mr. Lewis and of his *bête noire* Froude—is characteristic of his lofty mind. For a king of those days, he was moral, and his married life—all too short—was almost ideal. Mr. Lewis is probably right also in dismissing the charge, so often brought against him, of undue ambition. He was content with what he had, and neglected many obvious chances of enlarging his dominions. His piety was genuine, and his last days at Yuste were the natural conclusion of a life which had never utterly forgotten religion.

Even when we come to the Reformers, whose work Mr. Lewis of course thinks disastrous, we think it possible for Protestants to read his work with patience and some degree of assent. He betrays a certain admiration of the rough, bellicose, and unrestrained peasant-nature of Luther, and he has a genuine sympathy with Melanchthon; while he does not hide the terrible abuses which so largely explain the victories of the Reformers. It is when we reach his digressions, and his remarks on things outside his actual subject, that we differ most strongly, and that we tend to think him deliberately provocative.

Nearly all the evils of modern times he puts down to the account of the Reformation. The Industrial Revolution is *post hoc* and therefore *propter hoc*. Our present discontents would have been averted if we had continued to pay allegiance to Rome. The Great War itself would not have occurred but for the ninety-five theses. As for the Protestant or "Whig" historians, he spoils his case by reckless exaggeration. There is the usual Catholic abuse of Macaulay along with the usual Catholic laudation of Lingard. Froude was a liar, and knew it; nor was Carlyle any better. Robertson he attacks mainly for his account—six or seven pages in all—of Charles's cloister-life. For the inaccuracies of those pages Robertson was not to blame; the Simancas archives had not yet been opened. The rest of Robertson's work is, for his time, astonishingly careful and well-documented, and might have served as a model, in this respect, for Lingard himself. Curiously enough, when it suits his purpose, Mr. Lewis draws from these despised writers many eulogies of Catholics, and he might have drawn many others. He quotes Green's praise of the "kindly" Bonner; he might have quoted his account of Thomas More. He might have quoted even Macaulay on Pole and Bishop Gardiner. What Protestant writer but has a word of admiration for Abbot Feckenham, for the noble constancy of Father Forrest, or for the courage, at least, of Campion and Parsons?

There is, according to Mr. Lewis, no civilisation worth having but that based on Rome, and no hope of world-unity except in subjection to the Pope. He must know that, for many of the highest minds, *no* price is too high to pay for freedom from Papal domination, and that the freedom they now enjoy they regard as due, whether directly or not, to the Reformers. The right to think out things for themselves, to pursue truth quite regardless whither the chase may lead them, and without interference from authority of any kind, is the most precious of their possessions, and they will never surrender it. Mr. Lewis, like Bossuet before him, points to the multitude of opinions among Protestants as an argument for the truth of the Catholic faith. There are others who think that the wildest belief, diligently sought and honestly arrived at, is better than any opinion, however imposing its pretensions, held because one is commanded to hold it. "A man," says Milton, "may be a heretick in the truth; and if he believe things only because his Pastor says so, or the Assembly so determine, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresie." There is much now written that is foolish and erroneous: better so than that a single good book should require an episcopal imprimatur. E. E. Kellett.

SHORTER NOTICE

Justinian. By G. P. Baker. Grayson. 18s.

Mr. Baker's historical monographs are among the best things of their kind, and his Justinian, though no doubt inferior to his Tiberius, is none the less a vigorous and lively translation of scholarship into the vernacular. If at times Mr. Baker is a shade too colloquial it must be admitted that the very casualness and occasional flippancy of his style adds reality to his scenes and his people. The only person, indeed, who never comes alive in the present study is Justinian himself; we see him only through his policies which Belisarius did so much to forward and to thwart. Of Belisarius himself we are given a masterly portrait; but the real value of the book lies in its vivid account of the last attempt of the Byzantine Empire to regain its influence in the West, and of the politico-military scene in which the attempt was made. Procopius, of course, is Mr. Baker's main authority, but the more scandalous stories of the anecdotes are treated with suspicion.

Selected List of Spring Books

These lists make no pretence to be exhaustive. No one who has not attempted the task can imagine how invidious a business it is to read so many catalogues, and try to choose those books which are important in themselves, and likely to have a particular appeal to one's readers. That is my aim; of its success I am not the judge. It has been my intention only to include books that are yet to be published, or, occasionally, books that have appeared since the beginning of this month.

R. E. R.

ANTHROPOLOGY, ARCHÆOLOGY

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The question is taken up in regard to Britain in a book which Emile Burns has written for us, considering the various "ways out" proposed. This will be published during April for 2/6.

Many more people, not only workers, but also among the middle class, are turning to the fundamental works of Lenin, who foresaw the crises of the 20th Century and clearly marked the way to their solution. Apart from his Collected Works, we have now seven of the Little Lenin Library : KARL MARX (9d.), WHAT IS TO BE DONE (2/-), these defining his line of approach, THE WAR AND THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL (1/-), SOCIALISM AND WAR (1/-), summing up his attitude towards the war and colonial revolution, THE PARIS COMMUNE (1-), 1905 (1/-), his ripening comment on methods of revolution, and RELIGION (1/-).

As regards current problems, we have in THE SOVIET'S FIGHT FOR DISARMAMENT (6d.), M. Litvinov's Speeches at Geneva, with an introduction by M. Lunacharsky ; this makes a sequel to THE SOVIET UNION AND PEACE, which documented the period from 1917 to 1929 (7/6 and, in paper, 3/6). ROAR CHINA (3/6), Tretiakov's dramatisation of the clash between Imperialism and the Chinese workers, apart from its literary interest, is topical.

Our Marxist Study Courses are now under way (6d. a title), and of the History one, THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, CHARTISM, 1848, and THE PARIS COMMUNE will all be out this month, and the first of the Economics is just out, to be followed at fortnightly intervals.

Finally—for no column goes on for ever—two histories, one of the AMERICAN WORKING CLASS (5/-), the other, and of importance, Professor Pokrovsky's classic HISTORY OF RUSSIA (Vol. 1, 15/-), which gives, in addition to its subject matter, the interpretation of history by the present rulers of the Soviet Union.

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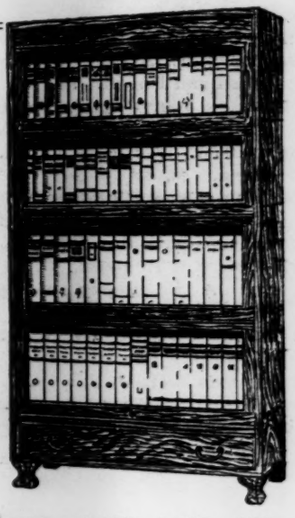

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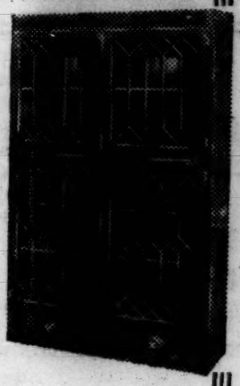

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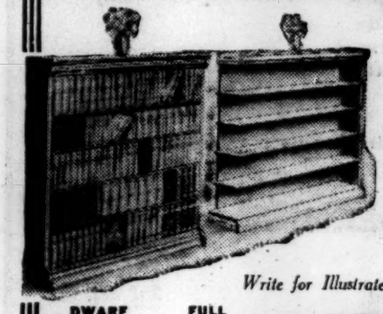

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